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WHAT YOU SHALL BRING.

Bring me a rainbow from out of the midst.
Or dew from a peach the sun has kissed;
Or a peach from the fragrant lily cup;
Or echoes of song that are welling up
From throats of birds at far off morn,
Sweeter than tones of silvery horn,
Bring beauty that's dearest, could you at will,
Something were wanting, longed for still.

Glamor of childhood, that glides through the May,
Hides in night shadows, lights every way
Lost in the years of the long ago
To find that it follows wherever you go,
And oft and again in gladsome surprise,
I've seen it peeping out of your eyes.
Bring only yourself, a kiss if you will—
Nothing is wanting, if you love me still.

THE WAR OF THE ROSES

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HIS WEDDED WIFE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," "PENKIVAL," "WE KISSED AGAIN," "BUNCHIE," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.—[CONTINUED.]

"I FEEL as though this were the happiest night of my life," she said—"as though no one could ever be so completely, so perfectly happy as th's."

"Why not?" he asked, wonderingly.

"I cannot tell you, for I do not know, my thoughts are as vague and indistinct as these beautiful shadows which lie on the water, but I have a strange feeling that in the after years I shall look back on this night as the happiest that ever fell to my lot."

"Do you think the moon will never shine so brightly again?" he asked, laughingly—"nor will the waters be so clear, with the quaint shadows falling over them?"

"It is not that," she said. "It seems to me that I myself shall never be the same; the difference will be with me, not with my surroundings."

"It is all nonsense, Gertrude. Rely upon it, our happiness will last our lives, and will increase rather than decrease."

And it seemed as though his words would come true.

They lingered for some time in beautiful Venice, and they went home by Switzerland and Germany.

They reached home in November, when the autumn was almost ended and the snows of winter were just beginning to fall.

Never was there such a royal welcome home. People said they would have gone many miles to catch one glimpse of the bride's beautiful face.

No wonder that her husband worshipped her! No wonder that she was compared to a sunbeam, and a flower, and a star, and everything else that was bright and beautiful.

Her title had gone before her. All who saw her admitted the truth. She was a lovely white rose.

"People could not have given her a fairer truer name!" everyone agreed.

For many generations there had not been so fair a bride of Neath, nor such grand festivities, nor such a high revel.

Everyone was feasted and feted; no one was forgotten: and to this hour they talk in that part of the country of the day when her ladyship came home.

There did not seem to be one shadow on their sky, not one rift in the lute, not one thorn in the rose—not even the crushed rose-leaf.

How would Isabel Hyde be able to keep her vow?

* * * * * *

THE WHITE ROSE AT HOME.

Neath Abbey as it stood was one of the finest old mansions in the land. No other name would suit it save "Abbey."

It did not look like a palace or a castle, a hall or manor, but essentially an abbey; the walls were of gray stone and as strong as those of a fortress; they were covered with thick green ivy that made the whole place look beautiful with a tender green loveliness.

The ivy had even climbed to the top of the steep towers, and clung to the turrets, hanging in rich thick clusters.

What is there more lovely in this world than the green ivy which grows on old walls!

The windows were large and arched; round them twined every variety of old-fashioned flowers—the purple wisteria, the richly-tinted Virginia creeper, rich red and white roses; but the large windows on the ground floor were all uniform; they were embowered in rich hanging clusters of white jessamine, such jessamine, with leaves so green and glossy, flowers so white and starry as could be found nowhere else.

The whole building, with its ivy-clad towers and turrets, its large arched windows with their wreaths of flowers, reminded one of the pictured houses in the Christmas annuals; it was so weird, so fanciful, so picturesque.

It stood in the midst of a magnificent park, where there was every variety of scenery—dells where the green ferns grew; hills crowned by trees, where the giant oak and the stately beech reigned in glory—where the silvery larch and the poplar, the blackthorn, and the whitethorn made "glory in summer and in autumn shade."

The beauty of the park was that everywhere, from every hill, from the crowned knoll, one could see the beautiful blue line of the sea.

The Abbey stood high, and from all its windows there was a glimpse of the sea that made the charm of the place.

You could go through miles of the deep green woodlands, through the fair pine forests, through the beautiful undulating park, with its wealth of trees and its herds of deer, and all the time, from one place to another, you could find a glimpse of the lovely sea.

The beauty of the place was increased by the fact that many of the most picturesque parts of the old ruins still remained; here an arch, graceful and beautiful; a pillar, a broken doorway covered with moss. People came from far and near to sketch Neath Abbey, with its picturesque relics of a bygone age.

This home, of which the white rose was mistress, was as beautiful in the interior as in the exterior.

There had been no time for redecorating or refurnishing it, but Lord Castlemaine had ordered one suite of rooms to be prepared for his beautiful young wife, that had no parallel for luxury or magnificence.

He had won the white rose for himself, and it was his fancy that everything about her should be white.

He ordered hangings of white satin and lace; he had all the furniture upholstered in white velvet; the hangings of the pretty bed were white silk; and everywhere was embroidered her emblem the white rose. It was something like fairyland; it was the envy and admiration of everyone who saw it.

The white rose was on the carpets, embroidered on the hangings, on the panels of the backs of couches and chairs, everywhere; the sweetest emblem of the sweetest wife, so Lord Castlemaine said, in the wide world.

Lady Castlemaine herself was a little surprised, and wholly charmed, by the size and magnificence of Neath Abbey. She soon began to love the place, and to share her husband's pride in it; but the very first difference in opinion that came between them was over the Abbey.

One bright beautiful day in December, when the snow lay white and thick in the pine forest, they had been to look at the beautiful scene.

As they quitted the pine forest, on one side of them lay the blue sea, on the other rose the grey, ivy-covered towers of Neath.

"It is a grand old place, Gertrude," said Lord Castlemaine, as his eyes lingered proudly on the great picturesque pile. "After all, the grandest thing about it is its antiquity."

"Antiquity is not always the greatest charm to me," said Gertrude. "If the house were dark or gloomy, all the age in the world would not make me like it."

"That is high treason, Gertrude," said her husband.

She, proud as he, and ready to resent any contradiction, answered quickly—

"No it is not. *Chacun a son gout.* I am no admirer of antiquity."

"But surely," he said, "you must see that it is the stamp of everything old—old books old friends, old wine, and old lace; old family, an old name, old blood!"

There was more than a flash of pride in her manner as she turned to him, her blue eyes bright, and her lips curved in a cold smile.

"I do not agree with you, Rudolph," she said. "I know many modern families, for instance, that are superior to the old ones—the old ones are effete, worn out, without any great or grand qualifications. The new ones are full of energy and untiring enterprise."

She looked at him with something like the dawn of impatience in her face.

"Take our own families," she said. "Yours is old—yours dates from the Conqueror. You have all kinds of annals, legends, and traditions. My family is a new one. My father was a city knight. I do not know that he could trace back any farther than his own great grandfather. But you do not think your family any better than mine, do you?"

She looked at him so straight in the face; she asked the question in such a very direct fashion, that he was, to say the least of it, startled, and he glanced at her in silence.

"You hear my question, Rudolph?" she said. "Why do you not answer it? I ask you, do you really think your family is any better than mine?"

And the hot blood of the Castlemaines seemed to flush into his face and surge through his heart, as he answered—

"If you insist upon it, Gertrude, that I should reply to your question—why, then, I most certainly do."

Her face flushed angrily, and something of defiance shone in her eyes.

"You mean to say, Rudolph," she cried, "that you consider yourself better than me?"

"I did not say that, Gertrude," he answered. "It was a question of our families not of ourselves."

"It is the same thing," she said.

"No, it is not, Gertrude. Take you yourself, for instance. I think you are peerless; there is no one in the wide world like you; but it would be absurd of me to say that your family is peerless, and that there is no other like it."

"But you maintain that your family is the best," said Gertrude.

"Let us make a compromise, and say the oldest," cried Lord Castlemaine.

She looked up at him with sudden contrition and tenderness in her beautiful face, with tears half dimming her lovely blue eyes.

"Oh, my darling," she said, "I was nearly quarrelling with you."

With a sudden and impulsive movement unutterably graceful, she laid her arms round his neck and kissed his face.

"My love, my darling," she said, "I was nearly quarrelling with you! How wicked I am! I told you I was proud, Rudolph, but you would not believe me; you would persist in thinking that I was perfect without faults. Now you see how proud I am—I would quarrel with you because you said that your family was better than my own."

"Even your pride is beautiful," said the young husband, touched to the heart by those caresses and sweet words.

The pity was that he did not always think so.

She grew pale as she lay in his arms, and shuddered.

"To think," she said, "that I have been so near having my first quarrel with you whom I love so dearly, and over anything so foolish as antiquity! I shall hate antiquity after this. Oh, Rudolph, hold me more closely to your heart, and promise me that you will never quarrel with me, no matter how bad tempered or proud I am."

"I will never quarrel with you," he said, kissing the beautiful face over and over again. "How can I, when you are so sweet and loving? I think a quarrel between us would be but kisses, after all."

Later on that same day, when Lord Castlemaine was enjoying his cigar in the pretty room, overlooking the avenue, which was called his study, she went to him.

With one of the graceful caressing gestures that made her so charming, she laid her hand on her husband's face and raised it to hers.

"Rudolph," she said, gently, "do you remember that night on the waters at Venice, when the moonlight was so bright, and we talked of all the fashions and ways in which love could die?"

"I remember well," he answered.

"Did you tell me one where husband and wife, having the same faults, grew tired of each other, and impatient, and ended in bitter hate? That will be our rock ahead," she continued, kissing the dark brows. "I have been thinking it all over, and I see that we have the same faults."

"What are they?" he asked, just a little amused at her dissection of character.

"We are both proud!" he replied. "You in one way, I in another; and we are both bad-tempered."

"You have been making some grand discoveries, Gertrude," he said. "I cannot quite plead guilty. I admit being proud, but I am not what people call bad-tempered. I am passionate—all the Castlemaines are passionate—I say or do a thing in hot haste, and then I repent it with all my heart. Sometimes the repentance comes too late. And how can you call yourself bad-tempered? I think you have the sweetest temper on earth."

She laughed in well-pleased surprise.

"I am glad you think so, Rudolph. I have found out another failing that I did not know I possessed; I am afraid that I am just a little jealous. Last evening when you admired Lady Hamilton, I wished that she were not so beautiful. I suppose that in all of us there is great possibilities for good and for evil."

"Your possibilities are all for good," said Lord Castlemaine; and so the conversation ended.

* * * * * *

A RED ROSE AT NEATH.

A week before Christmas—the outside world covered with snow, a white, bright world into which no sin or shame ought to enter; the wind went moaning through the great pine forest, and the sea dashed wildly on the shore; the snow lay on the ground

and on the bare branches of the trees, it lay so soft and white in the ivy leaves.

This year there was a magnificent quantity of holly at Neath, holly with glossy green leaves and rich crimson berries; round the sturdy oaks in abundance; and winter's sweetest flower, the laurestina, was in full bloom.

Lord and Lady Castlemaine were seated in the library; a bright fire burned in the silver grate, the lamps were lighted, and looked like huge pearls; even though it was nearly Christmas there were white roses in all stages, from the tiny sweet bud to the full-blown flower.

Lord Castlemaine had given his head gardener instructions that no matter what the cost or the trouble, he must have white roses in bloom all the year around.

He could take the large conservatory for the purpose, or another could be built—no matter what was done, white roses must be ready, buds and flowers, all the year round.

John Anderson, the head gardener, looked at his lordship when he gave those directions.

"If I am to do that, my lord," he said, "I shall want another assistant; it will take all one man's time."

"If it takes twenty men it must be done," said his lordship; and thenceforward John Anderson made it his business to cultivate plenty of white roses, and to bring them to perfection.

So this Christmas time there they stood as though in the bloom and fragrance of summer.

Lady Castlemaine was leaning back in her favorite chair; she wore an evening dress of black velvet; one exquisite rose nestled in the coils of her golded hair, and one in the bodice of her dress. Husband and wife were quite alone, and they were making up their list of guests to be invited for Christmas.

This was the month of December, and they had been married in May, yet Lord Castlemaine was a lover still; he kept all his love and worship of his wife pure and unsullied.

He had not taken one thought from her to give to another.

Now, as she held a little jewelled pencil-case in her hand, writing down a name every now and then, he thought to himself that he had never seen such a lovely white hand, so slender, so shapely, with diamonds on it that were like points of flame.

The first and foremost name mentioned between them was that of Isabel Hyde. Lady Castlemaine looked at her husband with a bright smile.

"I am more anxious to see Isabel than anyone else, and I think," she added, shyly, "that I might ask her alone without even Lady Cresson. I could be her chaperone."

Lord Castlemaine laughed as though he were secretly and deeply amused.

"Certainly you would make a most efficient chaperone, Gertie," he said.

She looked at him quickly, with a faint suspicion that he was mocking her.

"I do not see," she continued, quite satisfied with her scrutiny, "that we need ask Lady Cresson. I am almost ashamed to say it, but there is something about her which I do not understand, and I do not quite like."

"I like Lady Cresson," said the earl, decidedly; "she was always very polite and kind to me."

"Then shall I write and invite her?" cried Lady Castlemaine.

"No; as you say, you can play chaperone to Isabel Hyde. It will be more amusing to have all young people in the house."

So the name of Isabel Hyde headed the list.

"She will be sure to come, I should think," said Lady Castlemaine. "She was very much attached to me, and she was my chief bridesmaid."

"Yes; do you think I have forgotten? Why, Gertrude, every detail of that day remains as clear and vivid as can be."

He bent forward as though he would kiss her, but she raised her white jewelled hands, with a pretty gesture of authority.

"No, Rudolph, I have no time for love-making just now," she said; "we are already late with the list, and the letters must go to-night I hope Isabel Hyde will come."

"I think you may be quite sure of it," said Lord Castlemaine. "Gertrude, what shall we do to amuse our guests?"

"We shall find plenty of amusement," she said. "We will have balls and dances, and we will play all kinds of games in these great beautiful halls. I am ashamed to confess it, but when I see these great staircases and passages, I long for a game at hide-and-seek."

He laughed.

"We will have a game in Christmas week," he said.

Then the letters were written and despatched.

When a letter of invitation reached Isabel Hyde, she took it to Lady Cresson.

"What shall I do?" she asked.

"What you like—what you please," replied Lady Cresson. "It will not be a very agreeable thing to visit a man whom you failed to charm, and the woman who was a successful rival."

"I think that I should like to go, aunt," she said.

"There is one thing certainly; such a visit will set you right in the eyes of the world for ever; if ever there was the faintest doubt over you, that will set it thoroughly at rest. Lady Castlemaine can never have been jealous of you, or she would not ask you to her house the first Christmas of her married life."

"Certainly she was never jealous of me," replied the girl, proudly. "I made many mistakes, but not that. I should like to go aunt; Gertrude always liked me; it is kind of her to think of me first."

And a flush rose to the proud, beautiful face.

"Go, if you will, my dear; I have no objection. Your sister will stay with me. Go, but be prudent."

"I have been too prudent," was the bitter rejoinder. "If I had been less prudent and more natural, I might have been Lady Castlemaine now."

"I am sure I wish you were, with all my heart," sighed Lady Cresson.

"So do I," sighed Isabel Hyde.

The letter she wrote in reply pleased Lady Castlemaine; it was so kind so cordial, so full of delight at the thought of meeting her again.

Gertrude read it to her husband. He was not very deeply interested, although he praised it.

"I consider Miss Hyde a sensible girl," said; "she is coming to enjoy herself, and she is not ashamed to say so."

The other visitors do not concern this story. Isabel Hyde reached Neath Abbey on Christmas Eve, and for her there was quite a different reception to that accorded to the other visitors.

They were made welcome enough, but Lady Castlemaine received Miss Hyde in her own boudoir—the beautiful room hung with white satin and lace, with the exquisite furniture upholstered in white velvet, and although it was Christmas time, the bloom and the fragrance of white roses was everywhere.

Lady Castlemaine looked as beautiful as her room.

She wore a tea gown, with a bewildering little cap on her golden hair; and was altogether most fair and lovely to see.

The jewels glistened on her white hands, the light played on the golden sheen of her hair and on her flower-like face.

She went forward with a bright, almost eager smile to welcome Isabel Hyde.

She kissed the dark beautiful face that smiled into hers; she uttered warm and friendly words of welcome.

"I do not think," she said, "that either Lord Castlemaine or I should have enjoyed Christmas without you! I thought you would like tea in my boudoir," continued Lady Castlemaine, "while I tell you who the other visitors are, and give you a sketch of them. Some are quite strangers to you!"

Then the rival beauties had a quiet, comfortable half-hour; they drank tea and discussed the plans for the coming week.

While Lady Castlemaine talked gaily, frankly, and happily, Isabel Hyde's eyes wondered round the luxurious room. She noted every detail.

"White roses everywhere," she said to herself. "He keeps up the poetry of love. And all this ought to have been mine. If it had been mine, the red rose would have been where the white now stands. It ought to have been mine. I loved him first and I loved him best; she had no right to have taken him from me."

These thoughts ran through her mind while Lady Castlemaine talked to her, believing that she was talking to one of the best and most sincere friends she had.

Then they heard a footstep and the sound of a voice.

Lady Castlemaine's fair face flushed slightly; it always did when she heard her husband coming.

The face of Isabel Hyde turned deathly white, so white that she bent over the table to conceal it.

"Welcome to Neath!" cried Lord Castlemaine, in his genial voice, as he held out his hand to Miss Hyde. "I hardly expected when we first became friends that you would brighten and honor the old Abbey by your presence."

Kindly sounding words, but the inference drawn from them by that jealous heart was—

"Ah! then he never could for one moment have dreamed of making me the Abbey's mistress."

He did not understand why the light seemed to flash from her eyes so suddenly into his.

If he had known her as she was he would have struck from him the white hand held out to him; he would have turned in utter loathing from the beautiful face; he would have prayed Heaven to have saved him from this his greatest foe.

As it was, he saw only her beauty and her grace; he heard only the kindness in her voice, and he thought to himself that he and his wife were very fortunate in this friendship.

"I will take a cup of tea Gertrude," he said; and there could not have been a prettier or more homely picture than the luxurious boudoir—the pretty table, with its bright silver and delicate china, and the three handsome young people round it.

They talked and laughed so happily, so gaily, one would never have suspected a cloud in the sky; much less would one have suspected here the dawn of a tragedy.

But while Isabel Hyde looked bright and happy, she was going over and over again in her own mind the hour of that marriage service.

She stood again in the church, whispering to the white lilies that she would part the lovers.

Come what would, come what might, she would part them yet; and she meant to keep her word.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOWING THE SEED.

THE Christmas week at Neath Abbey passed most pleasantly. Lord Castlemaine was one of the most genial and kindly of hosts, Lady Castlemaine one of the most graceful and thoughtful of hostesses.

The favorite guest was Isabel Hyde; everyone saw it, but no one felt hurt or envious.

It was well known that Miss Hyde had been Lady Castlemaine's chief bridesmaid, and that they were on very affectionate terms.

Many a cozy half an hour in the warm, luxurious boudoir did the two friends pass together, many a ramble in the frosty woods did they take together.

True friendship, sincerity, and honesty on one side; treachery and the desire of vengeance on the other.

"You must be very happy," said Isabel to Lady Castlemaine; "there does not seem to be one thing wanting to make your life perfect."

"I do not think there is," replied the young countess. "I ought to be very grateful, and I am grateful."

"It is not often," said Isabel Hyde, "that one marries for love, yet has all that this world can give besides."

"Not often," replied Lady Castlemaine; "but that has been my fortunate fate."

"Then she did marry for love," thought Isabel; "all the worse for her."

Lady Castlemaine raised a bright, smiling face to hers.

"There is just one thing I want in the world," she said, "and one only."

"What is that?" asked Isabel.

"I have the best and dearest husband in the world, I have the kindest and best of mothers, but I have no sister; the only one thing I want in the world is a friend, a girl of my own age; and of my own tastes, with whom I can talk about the things that interest me, who would be more to me than other girls—a real, true friend; and whom do you think, Isabel, I would choose for that friend if I could?"

"I do not know," said Isabel, with a strange, sudden sinking at the heart; treachery is not always free from pain.

"You!" said Lady Castlemaine. "That is very frank speaking, but it is true; of all the girls I have met I like you best. Will you be my real, true friend?"

The dark face and the fair one drew nearer to each other.

In one heart was honest and loyal friendship, in the other bitterest hate and darkest perfidy.

"I will," said Isabel Hyde.

"Give me one kiss on the strength of it, just as a pledge," said Lady Castlemaine, and the two beautiful faces met.

"Now," said Lady Castlemaine, with a musical little laugh, "I have all that the world can give me; but, Isabel you look pale and tired."

It was not so easy to look into this fair, young face, and give no sign of the treachery at work.

When Isabel Hyde kissed the lips of Gertrude Castlemaine, she said in her heart—

"I will supplant you," and she intended to keep her word.

It is very sweet, when it is true, this girl friendship, and Lady Castlemaine was exceedingly happy in it.

Her husband had all the love of her heart, all her thoughts and cares; but there were many things she knew would not interest him, of which, young as she was, she liked to speak—dress, ornaments, partners; trivial stories of other girls; topics which would not have interested a man, but which were pleasant and natural enough to young girls—both enjoyed them; they discussed, as girl-friends will, every topic under the sun, nothing escaped them.

During the whole of those conversations Isabel Hyde lay, as it were, in waiting, silently, eagerly hopefully waiting for some indiscreet word the young wife might utter, by which she could make mischief and so insert the thin end of the wedge.

The time and the chance so patiently waited for came at last.

Lady Castlemaine had made a very fortunate discovery.

She had heard something of a valuable picture that had been locked away in a lumber-room, and she went with Lord Castlemaine to see it.

It proved to be a very valuable work of art that by some mistake or other had been thus locked away.

A housemaid with a soul for art, had made the discovery, had spoken of it to a footman, who was an admirer of hers; he, in his turn, told the butler, and the butler told Lord Castlemaine, and the result was the discovery of a most valuable picture.

While they were still in the lumber-room Lady Castlemaine, looking idly round, saw an old carved oaken chest; it seemed to have the rust of years upon it.

"That is a fine old chest," she said to her husband.

"It is large enough to have held Ginevra" he replied.

"I wonder," said Lady Castlemaine, "what is in it?"

"I will soon see," replied the earl.

When it had been brushed free from dust and cobwebs, he opened the lid.

What should lie there but untold treasure of richest lace, worth thousands of dollars—point lace, Valenciennes, rose-point Venetian—all of it priceless.

Lady Castlemaine uttered a cry of joy when she beheld it. Why it had been placed there no one knew.

"It was not my mother's," said Lord Castlemaine, "or I should have known something about it. It could not have been my grandmother's, or my mother would have known of its whereabouts. It has been placed here for safety in troubled times by some of the Ladies Castlemaine, perhaps in the civil wars, or the War of the Roses, no one can tell when. It is a treasure-trove Gertrude. I am not much of a judge, but I have never seen such lace in my life."

"Nor have I," said Lady Castlemaine.

They unfolded some of it. Lace so fine, it could have been drawn through a wedding ring, yet so strong that not a thread was broken.

Flounces, shawls, veils, collars, cuffs; never was there such a rich collection, and Lord Castlemaine gave it all to his wife.

"You will be the envy of every lady at Court and everywhere else, Gertrude," he said, laughingly. "You will have the finest store of lace in England."

She thanked him for it; and it so happened that, during Christmas week Lady Castlemaine told Isabel of the discovery, and took her into one of her wardrobe rooms to show her the treasure.

Isabel was in raptures, her face all smiles, her eyes bright as she looked and listened, but in her heart she was saying, "This should have been all mine. He knew me first, and I loved him best. It should have been mine."

"I wonder," said Lady Castlemaine, in her simple girlish fashion, "what mamma will say as he sees this! She is a worshipper of lace, she would rather at any time wear fine lace than diamonds."

"I like both," said Isabel Hyde.

"I hope you will always have plenty of them," laughed Lady Castlemaine. "I understand how the antiquity of this makes it valuable. I do not care for antiquity as a rule."

She was silent for a minute, then she laughed.

"Isabel," she said, "do you know that I was once nearly quarrelling with my husband, with Rudolph, over that word 'antiquity'?"

"Was this the chance? Was this the opportunity?" she then asked herself hurriedly.

"Quarrelled!" she repeated. "Nay, I could believe that the sun shone by night and the moon by day; but I could never believe that you had quarrelled with him."

"I said 'almost'" laughed Lady Castlemaine—"not quite. It was a narrow escape though. You have no idea how Conservative he is."

"I always thought so," said Isabel Hyde.

"He never talked politics with me, or anything else much, except love," said Lady Castlemaine. "He thinks the greatest boast of a family is its antiquity; I do not, I think activity, energy and industry, earnestness and perseverance, the courage to do and to dare, are all better than the antiquity that he upholds so strongly. My father was a city knight, a man who made his own great fortune, and I think my family quite as good as the Castlemaines; but he does not."

"He would never say so!" cried Isabel.

"Oh yes, he did; he made no secret of it. I told you we almost quarrelled; fortunately enough I remembered just in time that was not worth while offending him over such a thing."

"He converted you to his way of thinking, I have no doubt?" said Isabel.

"Indeed he did not, and to tell the truth, I feel some kind of vexation whenever I think of it."

"You have Radical ideas, then," said Isabel.

"I do not know if that is all," said Lady Castlemaine. "I am inclined to think that I was brought up to believe a good deal in myself, and I do not think it pleased me to hear that husband's family was superior to mine."

"Perhaps, though he said it, he did not mean it," remarked Isabel.

"Yes, he did. I should not respect him if he had said what he did not mean," said Lady Castlemaine.

"And that is the only point on which you have not agreed?" remarked Isabel Hyde.

"Yes, the only one single point," replied Lady Castlemaine.

It was not much, certainly, and the beautiful woman who listened wondered if it were possible that she could construct the thin end of the wedge out of this.

The next morning she was standing by the great window in the library, by Lord Castlemaine's side, and they were watching some robin redbreasts out in the snow. Suddenly she laughed a little laugh of quiet amusement."

"What are you thinking of Miss Hyde?" he asked. "It is almost cruel to keep anything amusing a secret."

"I do not know that my thoughts were amusing, and they are no secret," she replied. "I was thinking of you and Gertrude."

"Were you? What were your thoughts?"

"You were such a Conservative last year. I remember that I was surprised at your enthusiasm."

"I am Conservative now," he replied, "just as I was then."

"Are you? I should hardly have imagined it. I was thinking how strange it was that you should marry one who has not a Conservative idea. Gertrude amuses me. She considers the antiquity of a family its least recommendation."

Her eyes shone very brightly, her face changed. It was the thin end of the wedge. She saw it at once.

Lord Castlemaine frowned, his brows darkened, he looked impatient.

"Gertrude cannot mean such nonsense," he said, curtly.

"Gertrude does, and means it with all her heart," laughed Isabel.

It was the thin end of the wedge; how clever she had been to find it out.

Her heart beat with delight when she saw the frown on his face.

"He can frown when he thinks of her," she said to herself. "I shall win the victory and keep my oath."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WEAVING OF ANOTHER WEB.

THERE are many people who most honestly believe that when a woman is very wicked she is worse than a man can possibly be.

How true this may be it is impossible to say, but no man, not even the most wicked upon earth, could have set to work in a more treacherous or deliberate manner to annihilate the happiness and mar the lives of two people than did Isabel Hyde.

She had done what she could in a small way to prevent the marriage, but she had had no opportunity, she was in the same house, under the same roof; she was the bosom friend of the husband; she had studied each separate character; she knew the strength and the weakness of each, the faults and the virtues of each; she had made a complete study of both characters; she had devoted herself to it.

She saw that both were proud, both willful, that Lord Castlemaine was impatient; that he prided himself excessively on the antiquity of his name and race; that he belonged to one of the oldest families in England was his great source of pride and delight.

He could not endure one word of contradiction; he was indignant and impatient with everyone who did not share his views with everyone who contradicted him or opposed him.

Next to the Divine right of kings came, in his mind, the Divine right of old families.

He was not quite pleased that his wife did not share those feelings.

During that eager wooing and impassioned courtship of his, he had never thought of discussing such matters; it had been, as Lady Castlemaine said, all love-making.

He had many ideas of his own that were quite peculiar about some women and wives.

He thought they ought to obey implicitly and to believe implicitly all that their husbands believed.

The Castlemaine ladies had all been of that description—all gentle, docile, and obedient—yielding to their husbands in everything!

No matter in what faith they had been reared, the Ladies Castlemaine always adopted their husband's faith; no matter in what political school they had been reared they became Conservative when they became Castlemaines.

No such thing was known in the annals of the family as the rebellion of a wife against her husband.

No such thing was known as a division of opinion.

The Ladies Castlemaine, separately and distinctly, carried out that beautiful line of Milton's:

"He was all for God; she, for God in him."

But the line by no means applied to Gertrude Lady Castlemaine.

She had been brought up in more modern days, when obedience is an old-fashioned virtue that is almost out of date, and few people care to practice.

She loved her husband with her whole heart, but it would never have entered her mind to have changed any thought, principle, or idea of her own out of deference to him.

If there was to be any changing it should rather be on his side.

Had they been alone these differences of opinion would never have come to the front; they would hardly have noticed them; but the presence of their hidden enemy, Isabel Hyde, made the whole world of difference to them.

There was someone to note every slight difference; someone to report every word the young wife uttered, with additions so slight that they were hardly to be remarked yet it was these small additions that always held the sting.

It was Isabel who always repeated to Gertrude every remark that her husband had made on his ancient lineage, together with every word that fell from his lips on the subject of the newly-made rich, or the want of good descent.

It was Isabel who pointed all these words and in repeating them made her own comments, and told them in her own fashion.

She persevered so industriously, and she was so untiring in her efforts—she was so skilful—that she succeeded in raising the shadow of discord between husband and wife; succeeded, to her own unutterable delight, and rejoiced in her success.

Lord Castlemaine, who was far too noble himself to suspect any want of nobility in others, began after a time to entertain a certain sense of irritation against the wife whom he yet loved with passionate love.

"Why could she not think as he thought; why must she be the only one of the Ladies Castlemaine to have opinions and ideas different to those of the head of the family?"

Whenever she had an opportunity, Isabel Hyde talked to him about this.

Lord Castlemaine would say something either about the antiquity of his family, his house, his table, and dilate upon it. She was always equal to the occasion.

"What a pity it is, Lord Castlemaine," she would say, "that Gertrude is not of your opinion; she thinks so differently.

Then would follow a profound sigh, which said as plainly as words would have spoken—

"I am of your opinion, and have blind faith in all your ideas; but that is very useless."

Again Lord Castlemaine would feel irritated at some remark that his beautiful young wife had made, and which had been repeated with additions to him.

"I cannot imagine," he would say, "why Gertrude is not like the other ladies of our house."

There were times when Gertrude would tell him, with laughing frankness, that the other ladies of the house must have had minds like sheets of blotting paper, ready to receive and retain anything that was impressed upon them.

"I think," she would say, "that difference of opinion gives a great zest to conversation."

"A zest I do not like," cried Lord Castlemaine.

"You would like it in time," Lady Castlemaine would reply.

"I am quite sure, Gertrude, that I should not," he would answer with offended dignity.

"You think that a husband should regulate the ideas and opinions of his wife, just as he regulates the hours of meals, the quantity and quality of his guests," said Lady Castlemaine, laughingly; but deep earnestness lay beneath the laughter.

"Most certainly, I think so," he answered; "so would any sensible man."

"Sensible men must be at a discount," she replied. "I should say you are the only person in England who owns such an exploded notion of the rights of husbands."

"Still, I do hold them," he said; "and as I hold them you ought to respect them."

"No; I do not see that," answered Gertrude. "I should consider it tyranny for any man to expect such a thing. For a woman to do that would be to lose her identity altogether."

"A true wife should have no identity apart from her husband," said Lord Castlemaine.

But that beautiful young wife of his looked proudly at him.

"I would not do such a thing. I should never merge my individuality into that of any other person."

"You forget," he would say, "that husband and wife are one."

"In name, in love, in heart; but not in thoughts and opinions. It is a very different thing. Giving your heart and giving your mind are two very different things. I gave you my whole heart, Rudolph, but I did not give you my mind. I have reserved that for myself."

Lady Castlemaine, having the keenest wit, and, woman-like, the quickest flow of words, generally won the victory; but they were victories which cost her dear.

Each controversy, each argument—each stoutly contested argument—seemed to weaken in some little degree the love of the man who could not endure contradiction or opposition, who could not brook any ideas except those he held himself.

It would not have mattered in the least had they been left alone.

After a few minutes the wife would have gone to the husband and said:

"How foolish we are to argue and disagree over trifles. What does anything matter, provided we love each other?" or the husband would have sought his wife, and said—

"We will not argue, darling; let my stronger thoughts guide you; let your sweeter thoughts guide me; nothing matters but that we love each other."

But this never happened, for there was someone always at hand to fan every tiny spark into burning flame; to irritate, to annoy; to deepen every bad impression.

Always at hand! Whenever one of those little discussions occurred—and few days passed without them, she noted with quick, keen ears all that was said, and she knew exactly how to fan the fires.

Lord Castlemaine would go to his favorite seat, the great window-seat in the library, or out on the southern terrace, from where one could see the shining blue sea, and take a cigar to console himself.

So sure as he lit it, he would find the beautiful face and figure of Isabel by his side.

"I must try and convert Gertrude to your way of thinking," she would begin, and then a feeling of irritation rose in his heart that even a shadow could lie between himself and his young wife.

"I will convert her myself," he would answer proudly; but Isabel would shake her head.

"I do not know; I am not sure that you will," she would say, doubtfully, and that irritated him the more.

Then she would seek her other victim; she would kiss her beautiful face, and say, laughingly—

"You must not give in to that husband of yours, Gertrude. He has great ideas of his own authority."

"Far too great," she would reply, laughingly. "He wants three years' apprenticeship to a class of strong-minded women. I fear that even I am too meek for him."

"You must not give way to him, or you will entirely lose your own individuality," warned Isabel.

"I shall never do that," replied Lady Castlemaine, proudly; and although she loved her husband with all her heart, there was always a sense of angry irritation left after one of these conversations.

It was a web of another kind that Isabel Hyde was weaving now. It was more successful than the first.

Then she had tried to weave the web of love round the heart of one man, now she tried to weave the web of hate over two hearts, that but for her would never have been disunited.

She laughed at times with a wicked sense of victory, and at times she wept, despairing of success; but day by day the web grew larger and stronger and less liable to break.

CHAPTER X.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

IT is a terrible thing to throw oneself willfully into the way of temptation as Isabel Hyde had done.

Knowing that she loved Lord Castlemaine, she should have kept the breadth and the width of the world between himself and her; but in her reckless desire for vengeance, in her mad, passionate desire to fulfil her vow, she forgot, or utterly ignored the danger and temptation for herself.

She had given, unsought and unasked for, the whole, passionate love of her heart to Lord Castlemaine.

She hated with insane hate the beautiful girl who had, as she considered, taken her love from her.

She had voluntarily placed herself under their roof for the purpose of seeking vengeance, but she forgot that in so doing she must suffer unutterable pain herself, and she did so.

Every kind or loving word that Lord Castlemaine addressed to his wife was like a sword in her heart.

She would grow cold, sick, and faint when she saw his extra solicitude, his care and attention for her. Her heart burned with jealousy and envy.

There came a morning when a damp, cold wind seemed to sweep the frost away; the atmosphere was all damp, the skies grey and lowering, the sun had set in sullen discontent for the day, and Lord Castlemaine saw his wife wrapped in her costly furs going out. Isabel was with her.

"Gertrude, where are you going?" was the first question.

"I am going to Redmoss," was the prompt and cheerful reply.

Redmoss was the nearest town to Neath Abbey, a bright, pleasant town built by the sea.

"To Redmoss!" he repeated; "with whom are you going, darling?"

"With Isabel," she replied.

"How are you going? I hope you have ordered the brougham."

"Oh, Rudolph, what a string of questions! No, I have not; we are going to walk."

The conversation took place in the great entrance-hall, where Lord Castlemaine met the two ladies.

He went up to his wife and laid his hand on the fur sleeve of her jacket, a magnificent fur for which he given a fabulous price as one of his wedding presents to her.

"This is warm," he said, "but, Gertrude, darling, it cannot shut out the damp; you must breathe the damp air in spite of your warm furs. Do not go out, or if you will go, order the brougham."

She cried out impatiently that it would not hurt her, that she had often been out in the damp, that, in fact, she liked the damp, and would have no carriage.

"You make me feel like a delicate old woman when you fidget about me in that way."

She looked up at him with a smile as she spoke, but there was some little sign of irritation.

Isabel Hyde stood by, a silent spectator; each word, so expressive of his tender solicitude for her beautiful rival, pierced her heart.

"I will not be an old woman yet," repeated Gertrude.

"I like you to go out in the frost," said Lord Castlemaine; "that hurts no one, but damp air is quite another thing."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HOW TO CATCH COLD.—Sit in a street car next to an open window.

Leave off your heavy underclothing on a mild November day.

Take a hot drink before going out into the cold or damp air.

Let the boys romp at school during recess time without their hats.

Put on a pair of thin shoes in the evening when you go to call.

Fail to change your shoes and stockings after coming in on a very rainy day.

Have your hair cut and shampooed just as a change takes place in the weather.

Wear one of the new ladies' cutaway coats without a chamois or flannel vest underneath.

Send the children out in autumn for exercise in short, thin stockings and skimpy skirts.

Leave off your rough overcoat when you go driving, and wear your nice thin one to look swell.

Take a hot bath in the evening and sit up in your room to finish the last pages of an exciting novel.

Throw off your heavy coat when you reach the office in a hurry and put on your thin knock-about.

Go down to breakfast without a wrap on a chilly morning before the fires have got fully started.

Put the window of your sleeping room up before you go to bed, especially if the window is near the bed.

Run a square to catch a street car and take off your hat for a few moments to cool off when you catch it.

Go out into the lobby during a theatrical performance and promenade around without your overcoat.

Do your back hair up when you have been accustomed to wear it low and go out on a windy day.

Take a long bicycle ride and stand for a while describing and showing off the beauties of your machine.

Come in from a rapid gallop on horseback and stand talking in the open air to a friend for five or ten minutes.

Go to an evening party in a dress suit without putting on heavy underwear to compensate for the lightness of the cloth.

Bric-a-Brac.

ENCOURAGING MARRIAGE.—The Romans were so anxious to encourage marriage, that they punished unmarried persons by rendering them incapable of receiving any legacy or inheritance by will, except from near relatives; and those who were married, and had not any children, could take no more than half the estate. You had better get some relative to speak to your lover and hurry him on to a declaration.

HIS "EAR."—The "Ear of Dionysius," in Sicily, is a long limestone tunnel with a wide mouth. It is about seventy feet high for a distance of about 200 yards, after which the roof descends. At the further extremity of the high arch, and about sixty feet from the floor, is a small concealed chamber excavated in the rock, in which according to tradition, Dionysius sat to listen to the conversation of his prisoners below, who whispered stealthily of their plots and other doings. It is a fact that sounds produced below are so reverberated that a slight whisper, if uttered near one of the walls, can be heard in this chamber at about 200 feet distance.

TAXING BACHELORS.—There is talk in England of an intention to tax bachelors, and the absurdity of the proposition affords much amusement. But the matter is not so outrageously novel. It has been done before. Who does not know that such a tax was resorted to in Rome and Greece? Bachelors were heavily taxed, widows were compelled to marry after one year of mourning—some of them may have thought eleven months too long—and at one time a legatee, if unmarried, could not obtain a bequest unless within the space of one hundred days he found some woman to join him in holy wedlock. But we need not go so far back. William III. taxed the bachelors in order to carry on his war with France.

A CHINESE DINNER.—The new Chinese Consul at New York has given a dinner to his countrymen. The bill of fare was as follows: I. Dragon fish; boiled celery. II. Sharks' fins stewed; birds' nest soup. III. Sea worm; ginger and ground-nuts. IV. Fruits; eggs and preserves. V. Devil fish; roast chicken and duck. VI. Sucking pig; bamboo shoots and rice. VII. Perfumed pork, mushrooms and beans. VIII. Spiced sausage, stuffed eggs and millet. IX. Tenderloins with raisins and chestnuts. X. Moon cakes and confectionery. The drinks were tea, almond tea, arrack and Chinese liqueurs. The almond tea was a novelty, and consisted apparently of a sweet decoction of almonds re-inforced with alcohol and rock candy.

HE WANTED TO BE RECOGNIZED.—A gentleman who had been long attached to Cardinal Mazarin, and was much esteemed by that minister, asked him for some assistance. The cardinal, who had a great regard for his friend, explained to him the many demands made upon a person in his situation, and gave him many reasons for not being able to assist him, upon which the gentleman replied: "My lord, all the favor I expect at your hands is this, that whenever we meet in public you will do me the honor to recognize me, and to tap me on the shoulder in a familiar manner." The cardinal readily assented to this easy method of serving his friend, who, in a few years, from the advantages he derived from being supposed to be on such excellent terms with so powerful a minister, became a wealthy man.

SORROWS OF AUTHORS.—Many an immortal work that is a source of excellent enjoyment to mankind has been written with the blood of the author at the expense of his happiness and his life. Even the most joyous productions have been composed with a wounded spirit. Cowper's humorous ballad of "John Gilpin" was written in a state of despondency that bordered on madness. "I wonder," said the poet, in a letter to Mr. Newton, "that a sportive thought should ever knock at the door of my intellects, and still more that it should gain admittance." Of Butler's private history nothing remains but the records of his miseries; and Swift was never known to smile. Lord Byron, who was irritable and unhappy, wrote some of the most amusing stanzas of "Don Juan" in his dreariest moods. In fact, the cheerfulness of an author's style is always but a doubtful indication of the serenity of his heart.

A LOST OCEAN-CONTINENT.—For centuries the dream of a vanished Atlantic continent, which occupied the present bed of the ocean, has been one of the delights of literary men and one of the moot points of science. It was supposed that some terrific convulsion of nature, at a primeval period in the world's history, somehow overturned or disruptured this mighty space of land; that the water rushed in, and that with its inhabitants, its fauna, and its flora, and its architecture, it vanished into the deep. Ancient writers, mentioning its existence—of which they heard from the Egyptian priests—spoke of its equable climate and happy inhabitants, untroubled by care, until they took to war, and were punished for their sins with annihilation. In the cold light of science, however, the Atlantic, as we know it now, has existed from the first moment of recorded time. It is true that in the middle of the Atlantic there is a long stretch of what may be called submarine mountains rising to within a certain distance of the surface. But this ridge has no trace of having been a continent, and nowhere else under the mighty mass of waters has long series of scientific dredgings found anything which might be looked upon as proof that the continent ever had its being except in the brain of the poet.

and on the bare branches of the trees, it lay so soft and white in the ivy leaves.

This year there was a magnificent quantity of holly at Neath, holly with glossy green leaves and rich crimson berries; round the sturdy oaks in abundance; and winter's sweetest flower, the laurestina, was in full bloom.

Lord and Lady Castlemaine were seated in the library; a bright fire burned in the silver grate, the lamps were lighted, and looked like huge pearls; even though it was nearly Christmas there were white roses in all stages, from the tiny sweet bud to the full-blown flower.

Lord Castlemaine had given his head gardener instructions that no matter what the cost or the trouble, he must have white roses in bloom all the year around.

He could take the large conservatory for the purpose, or another could be built—no matter what was done, white roses must be ready, buds and flowers, all the year round.

John Anderson, the head gardener, looked at his lordship when he gave those directions.

"If I am to do that, my lord," he said, "I shall want another assistant; it will take all one man's time."

"If it takes twenty men it must be done," said his lordship; and thenceforward John Anderson made it his business to cultivate plenty of white roses, and to bring them to perfection.

So this Christmas time there they stood as though in the bloom and fragrance of summer.

Lady Castlemaine was leaning back in her favorite chair; she wore an evening dress of black velvet; one exquisite rose nestled in the coils of her golded hair, and one in the bodice of her dress. Husband and wife were quite alone, and they were making up their list of guests to be invited for Christmas.

This was the month of December, and they had been married in May, yet Lord Castlemaine was a lover still; he kept all his love and worship of his wife pure and unsullied.

He had not taken one thought from her to give to another.

Now, as she held a little jewelled pencil-case in her hand, writing down a name every now and then, he thought to himself that he had never seen such a lovely white hand, so slender, so shapely, with diamonds on it that were like points of flame.

The first and foremost name mentioned between them was that of Isabel Hyde. Lady Castlemaine looked at her husband with a bright smile.

"I am more anxious to see Isabel than anyone else, and I think," she added, shyly, "that I might ask her alone without even Lady Cresson. I could be her chaperone."

Lord Castlemaine laughed as though he were secretly and deeply amused.

"Certainly you would make a most efficient chaperone, Gertie," he said.

She looked at him quickly, with a faint suspicion that he was mocking her.

"I do not see," she continued, quite satisfied with her scrutiny, "that we need ask Lady Cresson. I am almost ashamed to say it, but there is something about her which I do not understand, and I do not quite like."

"I like Lady Cresson," said the earl, decidedly; "she was always very polite and kind to me."

"Then shall I write and invite her?" cried Lady Castlemaine.

"No; as you say, you can play chaperone to Isabel Hyde. It will be more amusing to have all young people in the house."

So the name of Isabel Hyde headed the list.

"She will be sure to come, I should think," said Lady Castlemaine. "She was very much attached to me, and she was my chief bridesmaid."

"Yes; do you think I have forgotten? Why, Gertrude, every detail of that day remains as clear and vivid as can be."

He bent forward as though he would kiss her, but she raised her white jewelled hands, with a pretty gesture of authority.

"No, Rudolph, I have no time for love-making just now," she said; "we are already late with the list, and the letters must go to-night I hope Isabel Hyde will come."

"I think you may be quite sure of it," said Lord Castlemaine. "Gertrude, what shall we do to amuse our guests?"

"We shall find plenty of amusement," she said. "We will have balls and dances, and we will play all kinds of games in these great beautiful halls. I am ashamed to confess it, but when I see these great staircases and passages, I long for a game at hide-and-seek."

He laughed.

"We will have a game in Christmas week," he said.

Then the letters were written and despatched.

When a letter of invitation reached Isabel Hyde, she took it to Lady Cresson,

"What shall I do?" she asked.

"What you like—what you please," replied Lady Cresson. "It will not be a very agreeable thing to visit a man whom you failed to charm, and the woman who was a successful rival."

"I think that I should like to go, aunt," she said.

"There is one thing certainly; such a visit will set you right in the eyes of the world for ever; if ever there was the faintest doubt over you, that will set it thoroughly at rest. Lady Castlemaine can never have been jealous of you, or she would not ask you to her house the first Christmas of her married life."

"Certainly she was never jealous of me," replied the girl, proudly. "I made many mistakes, but not that. I should like to go aunt; Gertrude always liked me; it is kind of her to think of me first."

And a flush rose to the proud, beautiful face.

"Go, if you will, my dear; I have no objection. Your sister will stay with me. Go, but be prudent."

"I have been too prudent," was the bitter rejoinder. "If I had been less prudent and more natural, I might have been Lady Castlemaine now."

"I am sure I wish you were, with all my heart," sighed Lady Cresson.

"So do I," sighed Isabel Hyde.

The letter she wrote in reply pleased Lady Castlemaine; it was so kind so cordial, so full of delight at the thought of meeting her again.

Gertrude read it to her husband. He was not very deeply interested, although he praised it.

"I consider Miss Hyde a sensible girl," said; "she is coming to enjoy herself, and she is not ashamed to say so."

The other visitors do not concern this story. Isabel Hyde reached Neath Abbey on Christmas Eve, and for her there was quite a different reception to that accorded to the other visitors.

They were made welcome enough, but Lady Castlemaine received Miss Hyde in her own boudoir—the beautiful room hung with white satin and lace, with the exquisite furniture upholstered in white velvet, and although it was Christmas time, the bloom and the fragrance of white roses was everywhere.

Lady Castlemaine looked as beautiful as her room.

She wore a tea gown, with a bewildering little cap on her golden hair; and was altogether most fair and lovely to see.

The jewels glistened on her white hands, the light played on the golden sheen of her hair and on her flower-like face.

She went forward with a bright, almost eager smile to welcome Isabel Hyde.

She kissed the dark beautiful face that smiled into hers; she uttered warm and friendly words of welcome.

"I do not think," she said, "that either Lord Castlemaine or I should have enjoyed Christmas without you! I thought you would like tea in my boudoir," continued Lady Castlemaine, "while I tell you who the other visitors are, and give you a sketch of them. Some are quite strangers to you!"

Then the rival beauties had a quiet, comfortable half-hour; they drank tea and discussed the plans for the coming week.

While Lady Castlemaine talked gaily, frankly, and happily, Isabel Hyde's eyes wondered round the luxurious room. She noted every detail.

"White roses everywhere," she said to herself. "He keeps up the poetry of love. And all this ought to have been mine. If it had been mine, the red rose would have been where the white now stands. It ought to have been mine. I loved him first and I loved him best; she had no right to have taken him from me."

These thoughts ran through her mind while Lady Castlemaine talked to her, believing that she was talking to one of the best and most sincere friends she had.

Then they heard a footstep and the sound of a voice.

Lady Castlemaine's fair face flushed slightly; it always did when she heard her husband coming.

The face of Isabel Hyde turned deathly white, so white that she bent over the table to conceal it.

"Welcome to Neath!" cried Lord Castlemaine, in his genial voice, as he held out his hand to Miss Hyde. "I hardly expected when we first became friends that you would brighten and honor the old Abbey by your presence."

Kindly sounding words, but the inference drawn from them by that jealous heart was—

"Ah! then he never could for one moment have dreamed of making me the Abbey's mistress."

He did not understand why the light seemed to flash from her eyes so suddenly into his.

If he had known her as she was he would have struck from him the white hand held out to him; he would have turned in utter loathing from the beautiful face; he would have prayed Heaven to have saved him from this his greatest foe.

As it was, he saw only her beauty and her grace; he heard only the kindness in her voice, and he thought to himself that he and his wife were very fortunate in this friendship.

"I will take a cup of tea Gertrude," he said; and there could not have been a prettier or more homely picture than the luxurious boudoir—the pretty table, with its bright silver and delicate china, and the three handsome young people round it.

They talked and laughed so happily, so gaily, one would never have suspected a cloud in the sky; much less would one have suspected here the dawn of a tragedy.

But while Isabel Hyde looked bright and happy, she was going over and over again in her own mind the hour of that marriage service.

She stood again in the church, whispering to the white lilies that she would part the lovers.

Come what would, come what might, she would part them yet; and she meant to keep her word.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOWING THE SEED.

THE Christmas week at Neath Abbey passed most pleasantly. Lord Castlemaine was one of the most genial and kindly of hosts, Lady Castlemaine one of the most graceful and thoughtful of hostesses.

The favorite guest was Isabel Hyde; everyone saw it, but no one felt hurt or envious.

It was well known that Miss Hyde had been Lady Castlemaine's chief bridesmaid, and that they were on very affectionate terms.

Many a cozy half an hour in the warm, luxurious boudoir did the two friends pass together, many a ramble in the frosty woods did they take together.

True friendship, sincerity, and honesty on one side; treachery and the desire of vengeance on the other.

"You must be very happy," said Isabel to Lady Castlemaine; "there does not seem to be one thing wanting to make your life perfect."

"I do not think there is," replied the young countess. "I ought to be very grateful, and I am grateful."

"It is not often," said Isabel Hyde, "that one marries for love, yet has all that this world can give besides."

"Not often," replied Lady Castlemaine; "but that has been my fortunate fate."

"Then she did marry for love," thought Isabel; "all the worse for her."

Lady Castlemaine raised a bright, smiling face to hers.

"There is just one thing I want in the world," she said, "and one only."

"What is that?" asked Isabel.

"I have the best and dearest husband in the world, I have the kindest and best of mothers, but I have no sister; the only one thing I want in the world is a friend, a girl of my own age; and of my own tastes, with whom I can talk about the things that interest me, who would be more to me than other girls—a real, true friend; and whom do you think, Isabel, I would choose for that friend if I could?"

"I do not know," said Isabel, with a strange, sudden sinking at the heart; treachery is not always free from pain.

"You!" said Lady Castlemaine. "That is very frank speaking, but it is true; of all the girls I have met I like you best. Will you be my real, true friend?"

The dark face and the fair one drew nearer to each other.

In one heart was honest and loyal friendship, in the other bitterest hate and darkest perfidy.

"I will," said Isabel Hyde.

"Give me one kiss on the strength of it, just as a pledge," said Lady Castlemaine, and the two beautiful faces met.

"Now," said Lady Castlemaine, with a musical little laugh, "I have all that the world can give me; but, Isabel you look pale and tired."

It was not so easy to look into this fair, young face, and give no sign of the treachery at work.

When Isabel Hyde kissed the lips of Gertrude Castlemaine, she said in her heart—

"I will supplant you," and she intended to keep her word.

It is very sweet, when it is true, this girl friendship, and Lady Castlemaine was exceedingly happy in it.

Her husband had all the love of her heart, all her thoughts and cares; but there were many things she knew would not interest him, of which, young as she was, she liked to speak—dress, ornaments, partners; trivial stories of other girls; topics which would not have interested a man, but which were pleasant and natural enough to young girls—both enjoyed them; they discussed, as girl-friends will, every topic under the sun, nothing escaped them.

During the whole of those conversations Isabel Hyde lay, as it were, in waiting, silently, eagerly hopefully waiting for some indiscreet word the young wife might utter, by which she could make mischief and so insert the thin end of the wedge.

The time and the chance so patiently waited for came at last.

Lady Castlemaine had made a very fortunate discovery.

She had heard something of a valuable picture that had been locked away in a lumber-room, and she went with Lord Castlemaine to see it.

It proved to be a very valuable work of art that by some mistake or other had been thus locked away.

A housemaid with a soul for art, had made the discovery, had spoken of it to a footman, who was an admirer of hers; he, in his turn, told the butler, and the butler told Lord Castlemaine, and the result was the discovery of a most valuable picture.

While they were still in the lumber-room Lady Castlemaine, looking idly round, saw an old carved oaken chest; it seemed to have the rust of years upon it.

"That is a fine old chest," she said to her husband.

"It is large enough to have held Ginevra" he replied.

"I wonder," said Lady Castlemaine, "what is in it?"

"I will soon see," replied the earl.

When it had been brushed free from dust and cobwebs, he opened the lid.

What should lie there but untold treasure of richest lace, worth thousands of dollars—point lace, Valenciennes, rose-point Venetian—all of it priceless.

Lady Castlemaine uttered a cry of joy when she beheld it. Why it had been placed there no one knew.

"It was not my mother's," said Lord Castlemaine, "or I should have known something about it. It could not have been my grandmother's, or my mother would have known of its whereabouts. It has been placed here for safety in troubled times by some of the Ladies Castlemaine, perhaps in the civil wars, or the War of the Roses, no one can tell when. It is a treasure-trove Gertrude. I am not much of a judge, but I have never seen such lace in my life."

"Nor have I," said Lady Castlemaine.

They unfolded some of it. Lace so fine, it could have been drawn through a wedding ring, yet so strong that not a thread was broken.

Flounces, shawls, veils, collars, cuffs; never was there such a rich collection, and Lord Castlemaine gave it all to his wife.

"You will be the envy of every lady at Court and everywhere else, Gertrude," he said, laughingly. "You will have the finest store of lace in England."

She thanked him for it; and it so happened that, during Christmas week Lady Castlemaine told Isabel of the discovery, and took her into one of her wardrobe rooms to show her the treasure.

Isabel was in raptures, her face all smiles, her eyes bright as she looked and listened, but in her heart she was saying, "This should have been all mine. He knew me first, and I loved him best. It should have been mine."

"I wonder," said Lady Castlemaine, in her simple girlish fashion, "what mamma will say as he sees this! She is a worshipper of lace, she would rather at any time wear fine lace than diamonds."

"I like both," said Isabel Hyde.

"I hope you will always have plenty of them," laughed Lady Castlemaine. "I understand now the antiquity of this makes it valuable. I do not care for antiquity as a rule."

She was silent for a minute, then she laughed.

"Isabel," she said, "do you know that I was once nearly quarrelling with my husband, with Rudolph, over that word 'antiquity'?"

"Was this the chance? Was this the opportunity?" she then asked herself hurriedly.

"Quarrelled!" she repeated. "Nay, I could believe that the sun shone by night and the moon by day; but I could never believe that you had quarrelled with him."

"I said 'almost'" laughed Lady Castlemaine—"not quite. It was narrow escape though. You have no idea how Conservative he is."

"I always thought so," said Isabel Hyde.

"He never talked politics with me, or anything else much, except love," said Lady Castlemaine. "He thinks the greatest boast of a family is its antiquity; I do not. I think activity, energy and industry, earnestness and perseverance, the courage to do and to dare, are all better than the antiquity that he upholds so strongly. My father was a city knight, a man who made his own great fortune, and I think my family quite as good as the Castlemaines; but he does not."

"He would never say so!" cried Isabel.

"Oh yes, he did; he made no secret of it. I told you we almost quarrelled; fortunately enough I remembered just in time that was not worth while offending him over such a thing."

"He converted you to his way of thinking, I have no doubt?" said Isabel.

"Indeed he did not, and to tell the truth, I feel some kind of vexation whenever I think of it."

"You have Radical ideas, then," said Isabel.

"I do not know if that is all," said Lady Castlemaine. "I am inclined to think that I was brought up to believe a good deal in myself, and I do not think it pleased me to hear that husband's family was superior to mine."

"Perhaps, though he said it, he did not mean it," remarked Isabel.

"Yes, he did. I should not respect him if he had said what he did not mean," said Lady Castlemaine.

"And that is the only point on which you have not agreed?" remarked Isabel Hyde.

"Yes, the only one single point," replied Lady Castlemaine.

It was not much, certainly, and the beautiful woman who listened wondered if it were possible that she could construct the thin end of the wedge out of this.

The next morning she was standing by the great window in the library, by Lord Castlemaine's side, and they were watching some robin redbreasts out in the snow. Suddenly she laughed a little laugh of quiet amusement."

"What are you thinking of Miss Hyde?" he asked. "It is almost cruel to keep anything amusing a secret."

"I do not know that my thoughts were amusing, and they are no secret," she replied. "I was thinking of you and Gertrude."

"Were you? What were your thoughts?"

"You were such a Conservative last year. I remember that I was surprised at your enthusiasm."

"I am Conservative now," he replied, "just as I was then."

"Are you? I should hardly have imagined it. I was thinking how strange it was that you should marry one who has not a Conservative idea. Gertrude amuses me. She considers the antiquity of a family its least recommendation."

Her eyes shone very brightly, her face changed. It was the thin end of the wedge. She saw it at once.

Lord Castlemaine frowned, his brows darkened, he looked impatient.

"Gertrude cannot mean such nonsense," he said, curtly.

"Gertrude does, and means it with all her heart," laughed Isabel.

It was the thin end of the wedge; how clever she had been to find it out.

Her heart beat with delight when she saw the frown on his face.

"He can frown when he thinks of her," she said to herself. "I shall win the victory and keep my oath."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WEAVING OF ANOTHER WEB.

THERE are many people who most honestly believe that when a woman is very wicked she is worse than a man can possibly be.

How true this may be it is impossible to say, but no man, not even the most wicked upon earth, could have set to work in a more treacherous or deliberate manner to annihilate the happiness and mar the lives of two people than did Isabel Hyde.

She had done what she could in a small way to prevent the marriage, but she had had no opportunity, she was in the same house, under the same roof; she was the bosom friend of the husband: she had studied each separate character; she knew the strength and the weakness of each, the faults and the virtues of each; she had made a complete study of both characters; she had devoted herself to it.

She saw that both were proud, both wilful, that Lord Castlemaine was impatient; that he prided himself excessively on the antiquity of his name and race; that he belonged to one of the oldest families in England was his great source of pride and delight.

He could not endure one word of contradiction; he was indignant and impatient with everyone who did not share his views with everyone who contradicted him or opposed him.

Next to the Divine right of kings came, in his mind, the Divine right of old families.

He was not quite pleased that his wife did not share those feelings.

During that eager wooing and impassioned courtship of his, he had never thought of discussing such matters; it had been, as Lady Castlemaine said, all love-making.

He had many ideas of his own that were quite peculiar about some women and wives.

He thought they ought to obey implicitly and to believe implicitly all that their husbands believed.

The Castlemaine ladies had all been of that description—all gentle, docile, and obedient—yielding to their husbands in everything!

No matter in what faith they had been reared, the Ladies Castlemaine always adopted their husband's faith; no matter in what political school they had been reared they became Conservative when they became Castlemaines.

No such thing was known in the annals of the family as the rebellion of a wife against her husband.

No such thing was known as a division of opinion.

The Ladies Castlemaine, separately and distinctly, carried out that beautiful line of Milton's:

"He was all for God; she, for God in him."

But the line by no means applied to Gertrude Lady Castlemaine.

She had been brought up in more modern days, when obedience is an old-fashioned virtue that is almost out of date, and few people care to practice.

She loved her husband with her whole heart, but it would never have entered her mind to have changed any thought, principle, or idea of her own out of deference to him.

If there was to be any changing it should rather be on his side.

Had they been alone these differences of opinion would never have come to the front; they would hardly have noticed them; but the presence of their hidden enemy, Isabel Hyde, made the whole world of difference to them.

There was someone to note every slight difference; someone to report every word the young wife uttered, with additions so slight that they were hardly to be remarked yet it was these small additions that always held the sting.

It was Isabel who always repeated to Gertrude every remark that her husband had made on his ancient lineage, together with every word that fell from his lips on the subject of the newly-made rich, or the want of good descent.

It was Isabel who pointed all these words and in repeating them made her own comments, and told them in her own fashion.

She persevered so industriously, and she was so untiring in her efforts—she was so skilful—that she succeeded in raising the shadow of discord between husband and wife; succeeded, to her own unutterable delight, and rejoiced in her success.

Lord Castlemaine, who was far too noble himself to suspect any want of nobility in others, began after a time to entertain a certain sense of irritation against the wife whom he yet loved with passionate love.

"Why could she not think as he thought; why must she be the only one of the Ladies Castlemaine to have opinions and ideas different to those of the head of the family?"

Whenever she had an opportunity, Isabel Hyde talked to him about this.

Lord Castlemaine would say something either about the antiquity of his family, his house, his table, and dilate upon it. She was always equal to the occasion.

"What a pity it is, Lord Castlemaine," she would say, "that Gertrude is not of your opinion; she thinks so differently.

Then would follow a profound sigh, which said as plainly as words would have spoken—

"I am of your opinion, and have blind faith in all your ideas; but that is very useless."

Again Lord Castlemaine would feel irritated at some remark that his beautiful young wife had made, and which had been repeated with additions to him.

"I cannot imagine," he would say, "why Gertrude is not like the other ladies of our house."

There were times when Gertrude would tell him, with laughing frankness, that the other ladies of the house must have had minds like sheets of blotting paper, ready to receive and retain anything that was impressed upon them.

"I think," she would say, "that difference of opinion gives a great zest to conversation."

"A zest I do not like," cried Lord Castlemaine.

"You would like it in time," Lady Castlemaine would reply.

"I am quite sure, Gertrude, that I should not," he would answer with offended dignity.

"You think that a husband should regulate the ideas and opinions of his wife, just as he regulates the hours of meals, the quantity and quality of his guests," said Lady Castlemaine, laughingly; but deep earnestness lay beneath the laughter.

"Most certainly, I think so," he answered: "so would any sensible man."

"Sensible men must be at a discount," she replied. "I should say you are the only person in England who owns such an exploded notion of the rights of husbands."

"Still, I do hold them," he said; "and as I hold them you ought to respect them."

"No; I do not see that," answered Gertrude. "I should consider it tyranny for any man to expect such a thing. For a woman to do that would be to lose her identity altogether."

"A true wife should have no identity apart from her husband," said Lord Castlemaine.

But that beautiful young wife of his looked proudly at him.

"I would not do such a thing. I should never merge my individuality into that of any other person."

"You forget," he would say, "that husband and wife are one."

"In name, in love, in heart; but not in thoughts and opinions. It is a very different thing. Giving your heart and giving your mind are two very different things. I gave you my whole heart, Rudolph, but I did not give you my mind. I have reserved that for myself."

Lady Castlemaine, having the keenest wit, and, woman-like, the quickest flow of words, generally won the victory; but they were victories which cost her dear.

Each controversy, each argument—each mostly contested argument—seemed to weaken in some little degree the love of the man who could not endure contradiction or opposition, who could not brook any ideas except those he held himself.

It would not have mattered in the least had they been left alone.

After a few minutes the wife would have gone to the husband and said:

"How foolish we are to argue and disagree over trifles. What does anything matter, provided we love each other?" or the husband would have sought his wife, and said—

"We will not argue, darling; let my stronger thoughts guide you; let your sweeter thoughts guide me; nothing matters but that we love each other."

But this never happened, for there was someone always at hand to fan every tiny spark into burning flame; to irritate, to annoy; to deepen every bad impression.

Always at hand! Whenever one of those little discussions occurred—and few days passed without them, she noted with quick, keen ears all that was said, and she knew exactly how to fan the fires.

Lord Castlemaine would go to his favorite seat, the great window-seat in the library, or out on the southern terrace, from where one could see the shining blue sea, and take a cigar to console himself.

So sure as he lit it, he would find the beautiful face and figure of Isabel by his side.

"I must try and convert Gertrude to your way of thinking," she would begin, and then a feeling of irritation rose in his heart that even a shadow could lie between himself and his young wife.

"I will convert her myself," he would answer proudly; but Isabel would shake her head.

"I do not know; I am not sure that you will," she would say, doubtfully, and that irritated him the more.

Then she would seek her other victim; she would kiss her beautiful face, and say, laughingly—

"You must not give in to that husband of yours, Gertrude. He has great ideas of his own authority."

"Far too great," she would reply, laughingly. "He wants three years' apprenticeship to a class of strong-minded women. I fear that even I am too meek for him."

"You must not give way to him, or you will entirely lose your own individuality," warned Isabel.

"I shall never do that," replied Lady Castlemaine, proudly; and although she loved her husband with all her heart, there was always a sense of angry irritation left after one of these conversations.

It was a web of another kind that Isabel Hyde was weaving now. It was more successful than the first.

Then she had tried to weave the web of love round the heart of one man, now she tried to weave the web of hate over two hearts, that but for her would never have been disunited.

She laughed at times with a wicked sense of victory, and at times she wept, despairing of success; but day by day the web grew larger and stronger and less liable to break.

CHAPTER X.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

IT is a terrible thing to throw oneself wilfully into the way of temptation as Isabel Hyde had done.

Knowing that she loved Lord Castlemaine, she should have kept the breadth and the width of the world between herself and her; but in her reckless desire for vengeance, in her mad, passionate desire to fulfil her vow, she forgot, or utterly ignored the danger and temptation for herself.

She had given, unsought and unasked for, the whole, passionate love of her heart to Lord Castlemaine.

She hated with insane hate the beautiful girl who had, as she considered, taken her love from her.

She had voluntarily placed herself under their roof for the purpose of seeking vengeance, but she forgot that in so doing she must suffer unutterable pain herself, and she did so.

Every kind or loving word that Lord Castlemaine addressed to his wife was like a sword in her heart.

She would grow cold, sick, and faint when she saw his extra solicitude, his care and attention for her. Her heart burned with jealousy and envy.

There came a morning when a damp, cold wind seemed to sweep the frost away; the atmosphere was all damp, the skies grey and lowering, the sun had set in sullen discontent for the day, and Lord Castlemaine saw his wife wrapped in her costly furs going out. Isabel was with her.

"Gertrude, where are you going?" was the first question.

"I am going to Redmoss," was the prompt and cheerful reply.

Redmoss was the nearest town to Neath Abbey, a bright, pleasant town built by the sea.

"To Redmoss!" he repeated; "with whom are you going, darling?"

"With Isabel," she replied.

"How are you going? I hope you have ordered the brougham."

"Oh, Rudolph, what a string of questions! No, I have not; we are going to walk."

The conversation took place in the great entrance-hall, where Lord Castlemaine met the two ladies.

He went up to his wife and laid his hand on the fur sleeve of her jacket, a magnificent fur for which he given a fabulous price as one of his wedding presents to her.

"This is warm," he said, "but, Gertrude, darling, it cannot shut out the damp; you must breathe the damp air in spite of your warm furs. Do not go out, or if you will go, order the brougham."

She cried out impatiently that it would not hurt her, that she had often been out in the damp, that, in fact, she liked the damp, and would have no carriage.

"You make me feel like a delicate old woman when you fidget about me in that way."

She looked up at him with a smile as she spoke, but there was some little sign of irritation.

Isabel Hyde stood by, a silent spectator; each word, so expressive of his tender solicitude for her beautiful rival, pierced her heart.

"I will not be an old woman yet," repeated Gertrude.

"I like you to go out in the frost," said Lord Castlemaine: "that hurts no one, but damp air is quite another thing."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HOW TO CATCH COLD.—Sit in a street car next to an open window.

Leave off your heavy underclothing on a mild November day.

Take a hot drink before going out into the cold or damp air.

Let the boys romp at school during recess time without their hats.

Put on a pair of thin shoes in the evening when you go to call.

Fail to change your shoes and stockings after coming in on a very rainy day.

Have your hair cut and shampooed just as a change takes place in the weather.

Wear one of the new ladies' cutaway coats without a chamois or flannel vest underneath.

Send the children out in autumn for exercise in short, thin stockings and skimpy skirts.

Leave off your rough overcoat when you go driving, and wear your nice thin one to look swell.

Take a hot bath in the evening and sit up in your room to finish the last pages of an exciting novel.

Throw off your heavy coat when you reach the office in a hurry and put on your thin knock-about.

Go down to breakfast without a wrap on a chilly morning before the fires have got fully started.

Put the window of your sleeping room up before you go to bed, especially if the window is near the bed.

Run a square to catch a street car and take off your hat for a few moments to cool off when you catch it.

Go out into the lobby during a theatrical performance and promenade around without your overcoat.

Do your back hair up when you have been accustomed to wear it low and go out on a windy day.

Take a long bicycle ride and stand for a while describing and showing off the beauties of your machine.

Come in from a rapid gallop on horseback and stand talking in the open air to a friend for five or ten minutes.

Go to an evening party in a dress suit without putting on heavy underwear to compensate for the lightness of the cloth.

Bric-a-Brac.

ENCOURAGING MARRIAGE.—The Romans were so anxious to encourage marriage, that they punished unmarried persons by rendering them incapable of receiving any legacy or inheritance by will, except from near relatives; and those who were married, and had not any children, could take no more than half the estate. You had better get some relative to speak to your lover and hurry him on to a declaration.

HIS "EAR."—The "Ear of Dionysius," in Sicily, is a long limestone tunnel with a wide mouth. It is about seventy feet high for a distance of about 200 yards, after which the roof descends. At the further extremity of the high arch, and about sixty feet from the floor, is a small concealed chamber excavated in the rock, in which according to tradition, Dionysius sat to listen to the conversation of his prisoners below, who whispered stealthily of their plots and other doings. It is a fact that sounds produced below are so reverberated that a slight whisper, if uttered near one of the walls, can be heard in this chamber at about 200 feet distance.

TAXING BACHELORS.—There is talk in England of an intention to tax bachelors, and the absurdity of the proposition affords much amusement. But the matter is not so outrageously novel. It has been done before. Who does not know that such a tax was resorted to in Rome and Greece? Bachelors were heavily taxed, widows were compelled to marry after one year of mourning—some of them may have thought eleven months too long—and at one time a legatee, if unmarried, could not obtain a bequest unless within the space of one hundred days he found some woman to join him in holy wedlock. But we need not go so far back. William III. taxed the bachelors in order to carry on his war with France.

A CHINESE DINNER.—The new Chinese Consul at New York has given a dinner to his countrymen. The bill of fare was as follows: I. Dragon fish; boiled celery. II. Sharks' fins stewed; birds' nest soup. III. Sea worm; ginger and ground-nuts. IV. Fruits; eggs and preserves. V. Devil fish; roast chicken and duck. VI. Suckling pig; bamboo shoots and rice. VII. Perfumed pork, mushrooms and beans. VIII. Spiced sausage, stuffed eggs and millet. IX. Tenderloins with raisins and chestnuts. X. Moon cakes and confectionery. The drinks were tea, almond tea, arrack and Chinese liqueurs. The almond tea was a novelty, and consisted apparently of a sweet decoction of almonds re-inforced with alcohol and rock candy.

HE WANTED TO BE RECOGNIZED.—A gentleman who had been long attached to Cardinal Mazarin, and was much esteemed by that minister, asked him for some assistance. The cardinal, who had a great regard for his friend, explained to him the many demands made upon a person in his situation, and gave him many reasons for not being able to assist him, upon which the gentleman replied: "My lord, all the favor I expect at your hands is this, that whenever we meet in public you will do me the honor to recognize me, and to tap me on the shoulder in a familiar manner." The cardinal readily assented to this easy method of serving his friend, who, in a few years, from the advantages he derived from being supposed to be on such excellent terms with so powerful a minister, became a wealthy man.

SORROWS OF AUTHORS.—Many an immortal work that is a source of excellent enjoyment to mankind has been written with the blood of the author at the expense of his happiness and his life. Even the most loose productions have been composed with a wounded spirit. Cowper's humorous ballad of "John Gilpin" was written in a state of despondency that bordered on madness. "I wonder," said the poet, in a letter to Mr. Newton, "that a sportive thought should ever knock at the door of my intellects, and still more that it should gain admittance." Of Butler's private history nothing remains but the records of his miseries; and Swift was never known to smile. Lord Byron, who was irritable and unhappy, wrote some of the most amusing stanzas of "Don Juan" in his dreariest moods. In fact, the cheerfulness of an author's style is always but a doubtful indication of the serenity of his heart.

A LOST OCEAN-CONTINENT.—For centuries the dream of a vanished Atlantic continent, which occupied the present bed of the ocean, has been one of the delights of literary men and one of the moot points of science. It was supposed that some terrific convulsion of nature, at a primeval period in the world's history, somehow overturned or disruptured this mighty space of land; that the water rushed in, and that with its inhabitants, its fauna, and its flora, and its architecture, it vanished into the deep. Ancient writers, mentioning its existence—of which they heard from the Egyptian priests—spoke of its equable climate and happy inhabitants, untroubled by care, until they took to war, and were punished for their sins with annihilation. In the cold light of science, however, the Atlantic, as we know it now, has existed from the first moment of recorded time. It is true that in the middle of the Atlantic there is a long stretch of what may be called submarine mountains rising to within a certain distance of the surface. But this ridge has no trace of having been a continent, and nowhere else under the mighty mass of waters has long series of scientific dredgings found anything which might be looked upon as proof that the continent ever had its being except in the brain of the poet.

A BUILDER'S LESSON.

BY JOHN BOYLE O'REILLEY.

"How shall I a habit break?"
As you did that habit make,
As you gathered, you must loose;
As you yielded, now refuse.
Thread by thread the strands we twist,
Till they bind us, neck and wrist;
Thread by thread the patient hand
Must entwine, ere free we stand;
As we builded, stone by stone,
We must toil, unhelped alone,
Till the wall is overthrown.

But remember as we try,
Lighter every test goes by;
Wading in, the streams grow deep,
Toward the centre's downward sweep;
Backward turn, each step ashore
Shallower is than that before.

Ah, the precious years we waste
Leveling what we raised in haste;
Doing what must be undone
Ere content or love be won!
First across the gulf we cast
Kite-borne threads, till lines are passed,
And habit builds the bridge at last!

A Thief in the Candle.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DOUBLE CUNNING," "UNDER WILD SKIES," "ALONG THE LINE," "BENEATH THE SEA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXI.

"SAY YOU'RE SORRY."

"THE young idiot!" panted Devick, thrusting the pistol back in his breast and staring at the boy.

Then, snatching a cover off a table, and oversetting a letter-weigher, he threw the cloth over the body, where it lay in the corner, and stood listening as the dank, foul reek of the powder diffused itself through the room.

"I did not mean that. How did he find the way to open those doors?"

He listened again, for there were voices outside and the sound of wheels; but nothing more than was usual; and, knowing how he had contrived to deaden sound in every way possible in his room, he felt no fear of the sharp crack of the pistol exciting attention outside.

At another time, perhaps, he would have recalled the fact that he had left the inner window unclosed; but it generally happens in such cases that, after taking every precaution a clever brain can suggest, there is one hole left through which detection creeps and punishment is dealt.

Devick's dark eyes glanced sharply round and, avoiding the two figures on the floor, they rested on the remains of the broken bottle.

"That will do," he muttered. "All the better;" and going to the bookcase, thinking of how, when the fire in the laboratory burst its bounds, the spirit-soaked carpet would leap into light, he stopped short with his hand upon the shelf, and turned to gaze at where the two bodies lay.

He must drag them in and conceal them there, he felt; but he could not do it. His nerve was gone.

"I can't," he snarled. "Let them burn here."

He stood panting as he buttoned up his coat, and trying to think out everything. Was all ready?

Yes.

The cab was at the corner, with Gedge waiting in charge of the cases.

Suppose he turned traitor, and carried off his treasure?

He dare not.

Devick smiled, crossed quickly to the spot where the carpet was soaked, touched it, to find that his hand was quite wet, and, going to the chimney-piece, he took a box of matches from a niche, turned, and was in the act of striking one when a slight sound behind made him start, as the bookcase door was thrust open and a policeman entered.

Devick bounded to the window, snatched aside the curtain, and threw up the sash, to see the light shining on the hats of a couple more constables.

Tearing open his coat, he dragged out and cocked his pistol as he dashed to the baize door, which struck him as it was thrown back, and Inspector Markus entered, followed by Frank Brand, Clara, and Polly Dee.

"Rice Devick, I arrest you for murder!" cried the inspector. "Put down that pistol!"

"Curse you! this was your doing!" cried the wretched man, glaring round at Clara.

"No, no!" she shrieked, as she ran towards him; "no, Rice, I swear I have been true!"

"You lie!" he roared; and he fired at her as she almost touched his hand.

The act was quick, but the inspector's eye was quicker, as, with his staff, he struck the pistol up, and the ceiling plaster came rattling on the floor.

Clara drew back slowly, and a look of loathing came into her eyes as she saw the man she had loved so well, seized, disarmed and forced down into a chair.

"No, Mr. Rice Devick," said the inspector, coolly; "I've been on the look out for you a long time now—first for stolen goods business, now for the murder of Edward Marshall."

"It's a lie!" cried Devick, wildly.

"Better hold your tongue, sir. The game's up. Bill Rixon is taken, and he swears he saw Marshall come in here, and he never came out. We've got Burny Gedge too, and your cases in the cab."

"Curse you!" hissed Devick.

"And now there's this business," said the inspector. "Is he——"

This was to Frank Brand, who was kneeling beside Adam Robson, and he did not finish his sentence.

"No," said Brand, rising. "Badly stunned, but he is alive."

"Thank Heaven!"

It was Clara's voice, and she stood with her eyes closed, and her lips moved for a few moments.

Then very quickly, "Where is the boy?"

There was a quick glance round as the constable who had entered by the farther door, where he had returned to stand sentry raised the cloth in the corner, and as he revealed what was beneath it there was a wild shriek, and the little charwoman, who had remained a trembling, unnoticed witness of the scene, rushed forward, to throw herself down and clasp the boy to her heart.

"Help! help! help! A doctor!" she cried.

"Don't, don't, auntie," said the boy, feebly. "You hurt."

"Oh, my boy! my boy!" wailed the little woman. "Who did this? Who did this?"

"He did," said the boy, feebly; "him—Devick—a coward—he shot me. Where's master? He shot me—he did. Ah! you hurt!"

"He's dead! he's dead!" wailed Polly. "My brave boy!"

"Curse him!" ejaculated Devick.

Polly ceased her wailing suddenly and turned upon him, with the timid, shrinking look gone out of her eyes as she glared round at those in the room, and then she almost shrieked out—

"You hear him, he curses him now after what he has done, when he has been a curse to my poor boy and me all my miserable life!"

"Silence!" roared Devick, furiously.

"Silence? No! I will speak now! The coward—the villain! he has killed his own son!"

There was an awful silence in the room, broken only by a hoarse, gasping sob, as Rice Devick started to his feet, in spite of the constables' grasp, and then sank back, livid of face, as if he had been of lead.

In the midst of the silence Brand bent down by the boy, cut away his jacket, and examined his wound.

"Do I hurt you, my lad—much?" said Brand, kindly.

"Yes, sir—no, sir—not so werry much," said the poor boy, wildly. "Go on, sir; I won't mind."

Brand rapidly plugged a rather dangerous wound in the boy's shoulder, and he was helped into a chair, where he lay back, with his head resting on Polly Dee's breast.

"Shall I die, sir?, Is it a-going to kill me?" he whispered.

"Kill you? No!" cried Brand, cheerily. "You have too much pluck, my dear boy."

"Have I, sir?" he said, smiling.

"Yes; you bore the dressing bravely for a boy like you."

"Did I, sir? Well, I am glad it won't kill me, old girl," he said, turning to Polly. "I shouldn't like him to be hung for killing me. I'll get better, then."

"That's right, my boy," said Brand; "but don't talk," for he noticed the boy's feverish excitement.

"All right, sir; I won't."

The boy smiled, and then winced with pain, but he smiled again as he saw his mother's anxious eyes, and Brand turned to where Adam Robson was giving tokens of recovery, and began to tend him.

"Now then," said the inspector; "we'll have you safe, Mr. Devick, before we search the house, if you please."

Devick winced, and was slowly rising, with Clara looking at him in an anguished way, when the boy's voice sounded quite distinct as he said, in a feverish, excited manner—

"I say, though, is he really my own father?"

"Yes, my darling, yes," sobbed Polly. "Your own father."

"Stop!" cried Jack, sharply. "Hold hard, bobby; I want to speak to him 'fore he goes."

The inspector smiled and glanced at Brand.

"Yes; let him," whispered the latter; "not for long."

"You can speak to the boy," said the inspector.

"Take me away," was the hoarse reply; but as Devick uttered the words he moved involuntarily towards the chair where they had placed the boy, so that he could get some air, nearly all present suffering from what they thought was heat produced by their excitement.

"Here, don't hold him," cried the boy, querulously. "He's my father. How's a chap to talk to his father with a couple o' plecemen holding on to him?"

The inspector smiled, and signed to his men to stand back, and they took their places by the doors.

"You too, auntie."

"Mother, my darling!" sobbed poor Polly.

"Well, I allus thought you was," said Jack, smiling. "All right, old gal. You go too; I want to talk to him 'fore he goes."

Polly put her apron to her eyes, and as she too drew back Brand advanced and felt the boy's pulse.

"Only a few minutes, Jack," he said, "and then you must be quite silent. You must not talk."

"All right, doctor; I won't say much; on'y I never had no father afore, and I wants him just for a minute or two."

Brand drew back to attend Robson, and the inspector, keeping a watchful eye on his man, stood back with the rest, but ready to spring forward if needed, by any attempt at suicide or spite, while the two men by the door were as watchful.

"Are they all gone away?" said Jack, faintly.

Devick stood with his back to the window, looking down upon the boy, his brow wrinkled, and a curious glare in his eyes that betokened mischief.

He nodded.

"Father!" said the boy, huskily.

Devick started violently, and his teeth gleamed whitely between his parted lips.

"Shake hands with me, father," said the boy, piteously; "not my right; it's all like being o' fire. T'other one."

Devick neither spoke nor made a movement.

"You'll shake hands with me, won't you father?" whispered the boy.

"Curse you! no!" hissed Devick. "See what you've brought me to."

"Oh!" wailed the boy. "No, no; not yet!" he cried, as he saw that Brand was advancing. "I'll be very quiet, sir. Just a minute, sir."

Brand drew back again.

"Ar'n't you sorry you shot me, father?" whispered the boy, with a sob.

"Curse you, no! I wish I had killed you!" hissed Devick.

"Don't—don't say that, father!" sobbed the boy. "I didn't know; and Mr. Robson was always werry good to me, and I wanted to help him. Say you're sorry you shot me father."

As he spoke, he stole out his left hand timidly and got hold of Devick's; and at the touch they saw a shiver pass through the man, as if some tender chord had been touched.

His face began to work in spite of his efforts.

"Say you're sorry you shot me, father—before you go!" whispered the boy again; and they saw him draw the hand he held nearer and nearer, Devick yielding it now till Jack could lay it on his wounded breast.

There was a spark of human nature left in Devick's heart, hardened as he was. He struggled to smother it out, but at that touch it flashed up into a warm glow that shone from his eyes, and, with a wild, gasping cry, he sank upon his knees before the boy and clasped him to his heart.

"Ah!" sighed Jack, as he bent down till his lips rested on the dark head buried in his breast; "I knowed you were."

Then he glanced quickly round, to see that the women were sobbing, and that Brand had turned away his head, while one of the constables was blowing his nose violently, the other looking at the ceiling.

The inspector was frowning and biting his lip.

Jack drew a long breath as he bent down with a sharp London boy's look, and, placing his lips close to Devick's ear, he whispered—

"They ain't han'cuffed you, father. I did this o' purpose. Get up, slow, and shake hands. Then turn quick. The window's open—hook it!—cut!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

HIS LAST CHANCE.

YOUNG Jack's words seemed to galvanise Devick into new life; and, checking the genuine emotion that thrilled his veins, he rose slowly, bent down and kissed the boy, turned, and then, with a bound like that of a panther, he was at the window—out upon the sill—and as the inspector's hands clutched at him, he made a tremendous leap, cleared the area, and lighted on the sharp rusted spikes of the railings!

The shriek he uttered was hardly human as they saw him writhe there horribly for a few moments, and then thrust himself off, with hands and feet acting together, as he was doubled in a heap.

Then he made a final effort to leap on to the pavement, but fell backwards, turning over and plunging headlong into the area with a sickening crash.

There was an awful silence, then the rush of feet, and a couple of policemen scaled the area gate and dashed down the steps.

"Got him?" cried the inspector, excitedly, as he leaned from the window.

"Yes," came up from below, in a hoarse voice; and then there was a shuddering "Ugh!"

"Well; what is it?"

"Dead!"

Clara Marlow uttered a wild shriek as the word reached her ears, while the wounded boy gave utterance to a piteous, sobbing wail, as he sank back on his mother's breast.

"Oh!" he moaned, "what have I done? I wanted to give him one more chance."

Again there was a terrible pause, broken by the inspector.

"Quick, sir! Here! By George! there's something wrong," he cried, as a dull explosion came from behind the bookcase, and then another and another. "I did reckon on searching this shop, but the place is on fire."

He ran to the window.

"Two men in here directly!" he cried. Then, running back, "By George! I'll save that boy."

He lifted Jack in his arms and bore him out of the room into the hall, threw open the door, and ran out into the street. "Cab!" he shouted. "Quick! Here, some one hold this boy!"

A crowd was gathering fast, and plenty of willing hands were ready to help him.

Freed of his load, he ran back to find his men carrying out Robson, who was still insensible; while Brand was bearing Clara.

They were only just in time, for a tremendous report came now from the library the bookcases were dashed out, and in so many moments the room was a mass of furious, roaring fire, which flashed along the carpet, leaped from the open window, and tore out into the hall.

Crash—roar—crash! explosion after explosion driving the spectators back; and it was evident that the place was doomed, the fire spreading with inconceivable rapidity.

"Here, what is it?" cried the inspector, forcing his way to the centre of a knot where a woman could be seen struggling, the glare of the many-tinted flames making the scene as light as day.

"Woman, are you mad?" cried Brand, clinging to her.

"No!" she cried, fiercely; "are you? Loose me! I must go!"

"To your death?" cried Brand.

"Well," she said, hoarsely, "what then? No one else can save her. Loose me, I say! Grace Robson is in that burning house!"

Brand's hands dropped to his sides, and Clara Marlow sprang across the pavement and up the steps.

The inspector made a dash at her clothing as she passed the door, and was then flung sidewise, Brand having struck against him in passing, for he too had dashed on, following Clara into what seemed a pit of fire, while the crowd uttered a shriek of horror, and then subsided into an awe-stricken silence.

A couple of policemen were at the inspector's side in a moment, and he turned to them, saying, hoarsely—

"I can't do it, my lads. I've a wife and bairns."

The men made no answer, but gazed with him in a stupefied way at the flames that were now beginning to appear at the first-floor windows, the glass splitting and falling with a musical tinkle on the pavement.

Just then there was the sound of wheels.

"The engines!" shouted a shrill voice.

"No, no!" cried another; "they're taking him as fell down the area to the 'orspittle."

There was again the sound of wheels, and cries of "Fire engines—the engines!"

But it was another cab, in charge of a couple of policemen, bearing away poor Jack and Robson, both insensible now to the terrible scene being enacted.

For Devick had formed his plans well, and, without the final touch he intended to give, the super-heated furnace had at last affected the spirits of wine.

A stopper had flown out, the laboratory was filled with inflammable vapor, and spirits and chemicals burst into explosion and flame with tremendous rapidity, once started, such a central core of fire dooming the house to certain destruction, no matter what power outside might be brought to bear.

That furnace had done duty for its owner once in hiding the evidence of a crime, but he never felt satisfied that every trace was gone, for he knew how ashes could be sifted and chemicals and microscopes applied to stains.

Hence it was that he had designed the destruction of the place when obliged to flee.

That it destroyed no more was his failure not his aim.

The crowd that surrounded the burning house needed no efforts on the part of the police, who were mustering fast, to keep them out of danger, for the flames that darted from the front windows and door were now augmented suddenly by a fresh explosion, which seemed to come from below, as the area windows were driven out, and the flames rose from the basement with a hissing roar.

On all hands people backed the far side of the road to crane their necks and watch the upper windows, as from time to time the rolling clouds of smoke were wafted aside, and the glass glistened in the ruddy glow of the leaping tongues of fire.

"See 'em?"

The question was asked a dozen times by voices hoarse with emotion, for it was expected, moment by moment, that the two who had plunged into the fiery furnace would appear directly beating out the panes from some upper window, and breath was held and ears strained to catch the first horrible shriek for help.

Then, amidst the wild excitement of the swaying crowd, whose eyes could be seen glittering and flashing in the light, the police made their way into the houses on either side, to appear at upper windows, gazing out at the raging fire, but only to disappear and be again seen much higher up.

"It's no good! it's no good!" groaned one of the spectators. "They were overcome directly by the fire and smoke before they got through that passage. "Ah! it's of no use!"

This was uttered amidst a burst of cheering, as one of the new fire escapes came up from a distance, the tall ladder glistening as it towered above the crowd.

But when it was in position in front of the house, the men in charge kept it back in the middle of the roadway, for there was no one visible to save, and had it been pitched against the ruddy-looking walls, with its top lit amongst those dense clouds of smoke that rolled up, it would have been cut through by the fierce rush of flames in a minute.

"You shouldn't have let her go!" shrieked a woman, as the inspector came panting out of the house on the left, after a vain effort to reach the roof.

He made no answer; but ran to the next house.

Meanwhile the hope that a face would be seen at one or other of the windows grew more faint as the fire grew much more fierce.

The whole of the lower part was one glowing furnace, and as the awe-stricken spectators gazed they could now and then see the tongues of orange flame licking their way through the ceiling of the drawing room, till masses of plaster seemed to curl and crumble off, leaving a great hole, through which they roared as if it were a chimney.

Then the windows that were black before burst into light, shivered, and flew out; there was a momentary glimpse of fire running up and enveloping bed curtains, and turning a great four-post bedstead into a cage of orange hue, and then the second-floor windows were pouring out their quota of smoke and sparks, which rose high in the murky night, and flakes of burning tinder eddied and danced in a whirlwind of hot air, like sheets of beaten gold-leaf, till they were borne away.

By this time three engines in their scarlet war paint were on the spot, ready to do battle by pitting one element against another; but there were delays.

There was abundance of water at the New River head hard by, and its pipes ran close at hand, but the turncock could not be found and though the hose was screwed together, and the shining copper branches were held, and the cheering men stood ready to bear the long horizontal handles of the engines up and down with sonorous clank, valuable minutes elapsed in which the fire charged all throught the rafters of the attic floors; and directly after it seemed there was a infinic warfare in the roof, as what sounded very much like a sharp fusilade could be heard.

Slates crashed and flew, the copper nails that held them burned like rocket-stars of violet hue, and a silver rain of molten lead began to run.

"Hurrah!"

At last three spurts of water, following the heavy clank, clank of the engines, and, as the water rushed into the burning house through the open glowing windows, there was a loud angry hissing among the fire dragons busy at their work; but, save that clouds of steam began to mingle with the red smoke, no effect was produced, for the fire was in full possession of the house, and every moment portions of roof and floor kept dropping through from top to bottom to feed the furious furnace at the base.

Crash! a mass of rafters.

Another crash, and the top floor had all gone.

Again a crash, a volley, a roar, and the rest of the roof was down among the flames hissing rafters hanging by one end from the party walls, and the smoke and sparks and burning embers one huge funnel formed by the gutted house, through which to roar.

There was no cheering now, but an ominous silence, broken only by the hissing of the steam, as the firemen worked to keep flames from spreading to right and left, while the crowd discussed the probability of the calcined bones of the victims being found when the ashes had been cooled.

"And that won't be for a couple of days," said one of the spectators, watching curiously a little man in black who was busily taking notes for the article he meant to pen about the "Disastrous fire in Clerkenwell. Loss of six lives. Thrilling scenes."

For he had been informed that three people had been burned to death, and three killed by leaping from the windows—not an accurate account, but the nearest he could get in the confusion; while the local color given to the struggle on the doorstep, when two people rushed through the flames to save the third, was perfectly transpontine in the theatre's best Thespian days.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A DIFFICULT RESCUE.

WHEN Frank Brand entered the burning house, he was met by a scorching rush of flame and a stifling volume of smoke, through which he dashed—how, he knew not, only that he was impelled by some force within him to risk his life to save one whom he still loved in secret, though he believed her unworthy of his love.

It was an affair of moments, with his brain stunned, as it were, by the horrible thought that the girl whose sweet face and wistful eyes ever haunted him was in that burning building, and he blindly rushed on to stumble and fall heavily as he struck against the stairs.

As he rose, he found that he had passed the flames, which roared from the open door behind him on his left; but the smoke was suffocating, and he crouched down again where the air was purer, and tried to gather his senses together and to think how to act—where to go.

Behind him were the roar and crackling of burning wood; over his head the great wreaths of smoke were rolling, but near him he heard steps, and a very hoarse, gasping panting, which he knew very well must come from the woman whom he had followed.

And now the calm of desperation came over him, and he realized his position and what he was called upon to do.

He only took a moment to make up his mind how to act, and then, gathering himself together and inhaling a long breath, he sprang up the first flight of stairs.

There was a window before him, and quick as lightning, he tried to throw up the sash.

Fortunately, it yielded, and a rush of pure air followed.

Bad for the fire, but it was new life to him.

He sprang up two flights, and there was another window, which stuck fast; but he beat out several panes, and again drank in new life and strength, the cool night air for the moment mastering the smoke that was slowly rolling up the staircase.

He ran on, passing room doors dimly seen through the vapor that was thickening fast, while the loud crackling below smote upon his ear, and told of escape in that way being barred.

But he took no heed of the warning, for always above him there was the hoarse panting of the woman ascending still.

What floors he had passed he did not know, but he knew that he must be high up, for he had opened or broken three windows, and Grace must, he felt, be somewhere there.

Suddenly the sound above him ceased, and he stopped and shouted, but there was no reply.

He ran up another flight, reached a landing, and, there in the darkness, fell headlong over something stretched in his path. Gathering himself up, he felt about him, and touched a cold damp face.

Was it Grace, or the woman whom he had followed?

There was no means of telling but by the touch; and his hands strayed over the face and then grasped the hands, he cried "No!" in a hoarse voice he did not know for his own, for he had touched a wedding-ring.

He tried to raise the woman; he shook her; he called to her to speak, but without avail; and, with the smoke half stifling him, he ran his hands about the walls, found two doors, and dashed them open.

"Grace! Grace!" he shouted; but there was no answer; one window was wide open and it gave him renewed life and giant strength.

She was not there.

Was there another floor, or was he at the top of the house?

He ran back to the landing, where he heard a low moan, and he knelt down and shouted to the woman again; but could obtain no reply, and, darting on, he felt about again in the darkness, and uttered a hoarse cry of satisfaction.

His hands had lit upon another door, but it was locked.

He tried to kick it open, but it was too strong, and though he beat upon the panels, there was no response.

He turned to his companion again, for they were moments of life or death, and the atmosphere was getting so stifling that, as a last resource, he dragged her into the room with the open window, and held her where she could breathe.

It was like a respite, standing there with the door closed, but he could hear the crackling and roar of flames from below, and, looking out, he saw that the fire was rushing from the lower part, apparently in the basement.

How were they to escape, he asked himself, even if he found Grace Robson?

There was only one of the two ways—to make a leap on to some roof below, or to reach the top of the house, and gain the next.

It was into a stifling rock of heat and smoke, and he would have dashed back, only that he had kicked against something, and, going down on his hands and knees, he scorched about and found what he knew it was—the key that must have dropped from Clara Marlow's hand when she was overcome.

With a cry of joy he felt for the door—for the lock—and in a few moments the door was open, and there was another—evidently an attic—staircase.

He dashed up, shouting "Grace!" and as he reached the top there was a faint cry from somewhere in answer.

There was a skylight above him giving him a few dim rays that showed him a door to right and left, and dashing one open there was a burst of fresh air once more, but no one answered his call as he rushed across and beat out some panes.

Then, running back, he kicked in the other door, throwing himself against it with such force that it was driven from the hinges, and there, pale and trembling, stood Grace Robson, clutching a table, on which stood an unsnuffed, guttered-down candle.

"Grace!" he cried. "Quick! quick! for your life! Why are you here?"

"I am a prisoner!" she said faintly; and she reeled and would have fallen had he not dashed forward and caught her in his arms.

"My poor, trembling lamb!" he muttered as he held her to his breast. "How I could have loved you had you been true!"

For the moment he forgot their peril in his joy at holding her in his arms, and, forgetting everything—her apparently willing flight with Devlek, her want of self-respect and love for him—he clasped her more tightly, and for the first time in his life his lips sought hers, and he kissed them passionately.

"She will never know," he muttered. "There, I must save her, or shall we die together?" He stood motionless, holding the insensible girl to his throbbing breast.

Then the desire for life came back strongly, and, bearing the poor girl to the open doorway, he laid her down.

He had not thrown open the window, but this he now did, breathing more freely, and, after satisfying himself that he could not escape to the roof from there, he ran out and across the landing to the other little attic.

This was in the front, and he looked down upon a roaring furnace of fire and smoke, through which he could just see the faces of the crowd.

There was no escape there, and he ran back, to find Grace struggling to her feet, and as, in the darkness, he caught her arm she uttered a wild shriek.

"Help! help!"

"Hush!—Grace!—Miss Robson!"

"You Mr. Brand!" she cried, as she clung to him. "Oh! save me—save me from that man!"

Her words sent a glow through Frank Brand as he held her tightly to him.

"I'd give my life for yours!" he cried, passionately; and, forgetful of all else, he bent over her and whispered, hoarsely, "How could you deceive me so, when you knew my love?"

"Deceive you?" she said, wonderingly. "Oh, Mr. Brand!—I?"

"Grace!" he cried, for there was that in her voice and in her clinging, trusting ways that was like a revelation to him, and he clasped her more tightly and all unresistingly to his breast. "I am mad," he whispered, hoarsely. "We have a greater danger than that man to encounter. Grace, my child the place is on fire."

"Yes; I knew it," she said. "I have known it for what has seemed an hour of agony—a prisoner locked up here."

"But there is some way on to the roof?"

"I don't know," she said, sadly. "I have been shut up here."

"By Devlek?" cried Brand, with a flash of suspicion even then—his heart was so sore.

"No, by his wife, I think—to keep me from him. I cannot tell you more. The fire! I am afraid to die."

"You shall not die, my darling—my love!" he panted. "Quick! out here. There must be some way to the roof."

He left her for a moment, and uttered a cry of joy, for he had, in the darkest corner of the landing, found the narrow upright ladder, and, mounting it his head came in contact with the trapdoor, which he threw back.

"Saved!" he cried, hastily descending, and holding out his hand.

She mounted trembling behind him, and the next minute they were on a square patch of leads, with the smoke and sparks rising before and behind them, and apparently no way of escape, for the roof went down suddenly from where they stood.

"There!" he cried; "we can breathe here. Good heavens!"

"What is it?" she cried, as he started from her. "Don't leave me, Mr. Brand!"

"I must! I must!" he groaned. "Don't stir from here, unless I don't come back"

"Oh!"

"If I do not, you must let yourself drop down there on to that next roof. There the reflection makes it lighter."

"Don't leave me!" she sobbed, clinging to him. "I am only a woman. I used not to be so cowardly, but I'm afraid."

"My darling!" he whispered, "I have left that unhappy woman below, I must save her."

"No, no!" she cried. "It is like going to your death. You shall not go!"

"I must," he said. "Grace, loose my hands."

"No, no!" she cried. "Frank—dear Frank—I love you so! I could not bear it!"

"You could not bear for me to be such a coward that I left a woman to perish," he said, firmly, removing her clinging hands and pressing them to his lips.

"But the fire is rising horribly. You are going to your death."

He made no reply, but kissed her once passionately on the lips.

The next moment he was down the steps, but had hardly reached the stifling black floor when she was down by his side.

"You mad girl!" he cried; "what are you doing here?"

"If you are to die, we will die together," she said, softly. "Quick! where is the woman?"

Brand paused for a moment, and then descended quickly to the door at the foot of the attic stairs, and throwing this open, there was a gush of heat and smoke that nearly suffocated him.

"Back, Grace, for your life!" he shouted, and, dashing to it, he staggered into the room where Clara Marlow lay, and dragged her to the door.

Here he struggled up and looked wildly round for help, but there was none; and as he gazed down at the roof of the house below, the distance seemed terrible.

He could have made a bold jump himself, but the women?

As he came back to where Grace crouched beside Clara Marlow she looked up at him with a piteous face that seemed radiant in the glow reflected from the fire.

"Must we?" she whispered, as she grasped his hand and pressed it to her lips. "It would be so hard now."

"No," he said, as a thought struck him.

"You could escape," she said, with a wistful look. "Good-bye."

"Good-bye!" he said, smiling down at her upturned face. "Grace, you don't know me yet.

He went to the trap, and, leaning in, the rush of smoke and hot air drove him back, but he tried again and dragged up the step ladder, angry with himself for his confusion in not thinking of so simple an expedient before.

He had just dragged it up when, above the roar and crackling, there came a shout, and to his great joy he saw a policeman coming along the roofs of the houses fifty yards away.

The rest were easy.

They were safe!

But the roof had fallen before Clara Marlow had been borne down the stairs of a house in the next street, after a perilous journey over sloping roofs, and many a pause to rest.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DOCTOR'S BILL.

GRACE ROBSON said that doctor never toiled harder to save life than did Frank Brand over her father, who was more than once very near the borderline that divides here from the dark, mysterious there; but science won.

The young doctor said though, that science was beaten by nature and camomile tea in the cure of young Jack.

He was very bad for a time, but as soon as he got the turn he became unmanageable, for he could not be kept in bed; his bandages could not be kept on; and his mother was constantly drenching him with camomile tea, an infusion she prepared in Mrs. Robson's kitchen, and a big black pot was going night and day.

Not that Jack liked it, but after a fight he always gave way.

"The old woman allus began to cry if I didn't take it," he said, "and so I allus did."

Clara Marlow, at her own wish, as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, was placed in a fly, keeping her destination a secret; and, at Grace's prayer, every idea of prosecution was given up.

She had her reasons for this, and they were connected with long watchings at the unhappy woman's bedside.

What took place there was Grace's secret, and was not told.

There was plenty stir about the catastrophe in Counter Street, and the papers were full of accounts of death and escapes, and then for a time the affair was forgotten.

It cropped up about a month later, when two men, Barnet Gedge and William Rixon, were on trial for burglary, and there was some mention of the little house that had belonged to Rice Devlek, the value of which, and the plunder seized by the police in ingots of gold and silver, went somewhere, though it is doubtful whether the original owners received their share.

In those days there was sickness and trouble enough in the Robsons' house, but a year later, when health and prosperity were there—the latter from the result of Adam's chemical research—in the days when Polly Dee moved busily about the place as a little housekeeper, in black and a widow's cap, and would worry the cook and housemaid by doing a good deal of their work—when young Jack was getting on—badly, his master said—at school, where he was looked upon as a pupil with tremendous prospects.

Adam Robson said to the young doctor, for about the fiftieth time—

"My dear Brand, when am I to have in your bill? I do so want to be out of debt."

"Well," said Brand; "the fact is I have not liked to present it, for you all gave me a deal of trouble, and it is very extravagant indeed."

"If it is a thousand pounds I can pay it, oh, wife?" said Robson, proudly.

"Yes, Mr. Brand," said Mrs. Robson, "and we will."

"Come, that's refreshing," said Brand, smiling; "for though I have had some luck, I do not want to be paid."

"When will you let me have the account, then?"

"Oh! I hardly know."

"Then I shall pay you without," said Robson, clapping him on the shoulder. "I shall make it out, and charge for medical attendance, one thousand pounds!"

"Pish!" cried Brand, contemptuously. "Ten thousand would not pay for what I did."

Husband and wife looked troubled, and exchanged glances, while Grace half rose from her seat, with a pained look in her eyes.

"There are some debts that cannot be cancelled with money, Mr. Robson," said Brand, gravely. "This is one."

"True," said the goldsmith, quietly; "and we are grateful; indeed we are Brand."

"Then pay me as you should!" he cried.

"How? What shall I do?"

"Pay me in kin or kind," said Brand, laughing. "No money. I must have a slave.

Grace's eyes brightened as she read his meaning, and they brightened more, and then grew soft with tears, as he took her hand, passed one arm round her, and led her up to the elder couple.

"I want this hand for my payment," said Brand, gravely; "this, and no other, for my practice will well afford for me to keep a wife."

Adam Robson paid him like a man.

* * * * * *

They never saw Clara Marlow again, but the secret of her retreat was public property a couple of years later, when her brother was prosecuted for detaining at his establishment a sane person whose relatives declared that he was demented.

It then came out that Clara kept the doctor's house.]

* * * * * *

From the time of his recovery, prosperity kept poverty at defiance in Adam Robson's home, but he often referred to the past.

"Ah! wife," he used to say; "there's a thief in every candle at some time;" and as she would look up, he would add—"I was speaking of the light of life."

[THE END.]

A PALATKA (Fla.) man, while duck-shooting the other day, was knocked overboard by a "kick" of his gun, and narrowly escaped drowning.

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The Degree of Friend.

"There is no friend like an old friend"—so runs the ancient legend, and of course it is true.

Old friends are privileged characters. They can drop in upon us ten minutes before we are going to sit down to a picked-up dinner, and they assure us that they wouldn't be any trouble for the world—they are quite one of the family, and we needn't put ourselves out one bit; and they eat the one piece of pie there is, and devour the cold chicken, while we look on and munch our bread and butter and reflect that too much eating brings on dyspepsia and liver complaint.

Old friends take the liberty of looking over our house to see if we have got anything new. They will invade the chambers—especially if the beds are not made—and wonder how we can sleep with the windows up and so much malaria floating round nights. Or they will want to know how we *do* manage to breathe with the windows closed, and carbonic acid gas filling all the room.

They will criticise our babies, and remark on the shape of their noses, and compare them with the babies of Brown and Jones; and they will tell you that Robinson's baby is a third larger than yours, and ever so much more forward. Or, perhaps, they will take the opposite ground, and ask you if you don't feel bad because Sammy is so dreadfully precocious, and if you expect to raise him; and they will sigh, and remark that children who are inclined to be smart always die young.

Old friends are always comparing notes about your hair and your teeth. "How well your teeth hold out! Now, there is Mrs. Grey, about your age, and she's had false teeth for ten years!"

They talk over your age before your new friends. Why under the sun it is that nobody likes to talk over his age, unless he is very young, or very old, we do not know; but such is the fact. And you mortally hate to have your old friend get on to that subject among your new new friends. And the more you try to hush her up, and turn the conversation, the more she will stick to the subject.

Old friends take the liberty of telling you what people say about you. Why, we know an old friend who wouldn't mind walking ten miles to tell us "that she heard Mary Ann Brown's husband say that Mr. Smith's mother said, that she thought of all the dreadful, cross-looking folks that ever she see, we beat 'em."

Our old friends know all our faults. They have nothing new to find out. They know just how ill-tempered we can be under provocation. They know all our family secrets, and can tell to a nicety all the little mean tricks our grandfather ever did; and they know that our grandmother sold huckleberries, and our Uncle Jim made baskets, and the will speak of it before our new friends—just as if they regretted the fact, but felt obliged to mention it, lest we should sail under false colors.

Old friends borrow money of us on the strength of our early friendship, and fail to pay it for the same reason. They step on our toes every time we meet, they rasp on our tender places, they annoy and fret us in various ways; but, after all, they are our friends—our old friends—a link connecting us with the past—the dear, departed past; and we love them, and wouldn't be without them for a king's ransom.

In each of us are the germs of passions which, like bandits in ambush, will finally leap forth to destroy, if nursed into vigorous life in the forcing-house of Temptation and Opportunity. When they have worked their will, they leave us shadows of our former selves; there is a sort of death in life, as though the gaunt corpse of life were cast up on the desolate shore of time. The troubled current of fate bears on; yet ever and anon we have visions of a serener loveliness—of waves moonlit, the romance, beauty and passion of youth, of ambrosial vales and green hills far away. The position of the advancing man must always be receptive. Waves of feeling flow through the heart of the poet and of the painter; the lute is turned to a lottier strain, the artist strives to portray higher ideals. The age is of tumult and endeavor; the deep thought of our great men are billows on the stream of tendency. Truth is like the great ocean flowing into the soul, bathing it in a new and beautiful element. When the tumultuous waves run high and shake the soul of man, he finds his proper place; he battles for his convictions. Above them is the great immutable cause—and the voice of God speaks. Each life is all men's lesson; we cannot always be on the mountain-top; we must recede from high-water mark; there is a vast ebb from a vast flow. There is an outward, superficial progress, which may fade very rapidly; but the flow of the deep under-currents, gathering momentum and gaining force with their onward sweep, roll up the grand results upon the shores of time.

Pessimists is the fashionable term, and has a more dignified aspect than croakers, but the former is a Latin work, and not understood by everybody, while the latter is good old Anglo-Saxon, and tells its own story. It is evidently copied from the somewhat limited and uneuphonious vocabulary of the frog and the raven. The act of croaking is probably not intended to convey any melancholy expression of discontent on the part of either of these creatures. We must not suppose that the raven is necessarily an unhappy bird, or the frog an unhappy reptile, but there is something in the tones of their voice that inspires a feeling of sadness, and so we have applied the croak which they make to designate that class of human beings who are always looking at the dark side of things, and always talking about it. It is very likely that the act of croaking, or the utterance of their griefs, affords them much relief, and it may impart to their minds a sable kind of pleasure, as they often seem to have their pet griefs, which the cosset, and hug, and dwell upon with a species of fondness. We once heard a physician say that he did not enjoy chronic cases—implying that his cup of happiness was full when he got hold of an acute and vigorous case of cholera, or anything that demanded heroic treatment. This instance typifies the whole class, and it must be said in their case that pleasure may certainly be derived from strange sources.

There is a natural principle in man lowering him, deadening him, pulling him down by inches to the mere animal plane, blinding reason, searing conscience, paralyzing will. This is the active, destroying principle of sin. Now, to counteract this, it has discovered to us another principle which will stop this drifting process in the soul, steer it round, and make it drift the other way. This is the active, saving principle, or salvation. If a man find the first of these powers furiously at work within him, dragging his whole life downward to destruction, there is only one way to escape his fate—to take resolute hold of the upward power, and be borne by it to the opposite goal. And as this second power is the only one in the universe which has the slightest real effect upon the first, how shall man escape if he neglect it? To neglect it is to cut off the only possible chance of escape. In declining this he is simply abandoning himself, with his eyes open, to that other and terrible energy which is already there, and which, in the natural course of things, is bearing him every moment further and further from escape.

While we should adjudge that man mad who, at high tide, should endeavor to keep back the waves, or secure sunlight without a shadow, the sanest of us are doing something of the same sort in another direction. For example, a man seeks after wealth without counting the cost. He foresees its pleasures, its advantages, its opportunities, but not the duties and responsibilities it will involve, nor the sacrifice of other and perhaps higher things which its eager pursuit will demand. Gradually, without intending it, he resigns one thing after another in his absorbing work. Perhaps it is his health, his culture, his family fireside, or even his self-respect. Presently he gains the object of his chase; but the happiness he expected has meantime slipped away, and the account is more than balanced on the other side. He may not see his losses with the same vividness that he sees his gains, but, if he is poorer in health, or in power, or in character, or in domestic happiness, he has overreached himself in his vain effort to cheat nature.

No article of furniture that will not stand sunlight should be put in a room, for every room in a dwelling should have the windows so arranged that some time during the day the sunlight may enter freely into the apartments. The importance of admitting the light of the sun freely to all parts of our dwellings cannot be too highly estimated. Indeed, perfect health is nearly as dependent on pure sunlight as it is on pure air. Sunlight should never be excluded, except when so bright as to be uncomfortable to the eyes. And walking should be in bright sunlight. A sun-bath is of more importance in preserving a healthful condition of the body than is generally understood. It is a well-established fact that the people who live much in the sun are generally stronger and more healthy than those whose occupations deprive them of sunlight.

In his address on "Manhood," Canon Farrar said, the other day, that self-possession, self devotion, independence and courage were the necessary qualities for manhood, but were only to be considered as foundation stones. Said he: We must begin with self-possession, proceed with courage, and exercise them with independence. In closing, let me give you a line from one of your own poets. Mr. Emerson says:

> So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low, Thou must,
> The youth replies, I can.

There is no necessity for a child to be self-willed and disobedient because it is an only one. On the contrary, there is all the more reason for it to learn obedience early, though it may not have the reflected teaching of seeing others punished for disobedience and naughtiness. Again, it should be taught as early as possible to amuse itself. Try to rouse its interest in all that goes on around; otherwise it will soon grow dependent on its seniors, and will not trouble to think or plan amusements for itself.

Force is power, fuss is noise; the one is work, the other is talk; the one is the moving of the engine, the other is the escape of steam. There may be sound in force; there is nothing but sound in fuss. The one may be quiet and gentle, and yet retain its essential character; the other loses its identity when quietness comes. Force moves steadily onward to the production of the result in view; fuss raves, and roars, and agitates, yet accomplishes nothing. Force is radical; fuss is superficial.

When you are disposed to be vain of your mental acquirements, look up to those who are more accomplished than yourself, that you may be fired with emulation; but when you feel dissatisfied with your circumstances, look down on those beneath you, that you may learn contentment.

We crave good gifts—wealth, perhaps, or fame, or love. But do we think what they mean? Responsibility; and responsibility means works and self-denial. Happiness is the unknown quantity which is continually working itself out by holding to these.

The World's Happenings.

New York city has eight hundred rag-pickers.

They dig potatoes by steam now, tossing out 800 barrels a day.

A 90-pound head of cabbage is on exhibition in a California town.

A Washington bridegroom recently gave the minister a $1,000 note.

The owls in New Zealand kill sheep, slaying thousands every year.

Nevada public schools will hereafter admit no pupil over 18 years old.

King Ludwig, of Bavaria, thrashes the dentist every time he has a tooth pulled.

All the cotton grown in America could be produced in one corner of the State of Texas.

There are now thirty-six persons in the Kansas Penitentiary under sentence of death for murder.

A gun now under process of manufacture at Elswick, for the British Government, will weigh 200 tons.

"Gone beel and garbage" is announced by a German restaurateur, in New York, among his cheap dinners.

A woman living at Patchogue, L. I., was fatally injured by a goat, which attacked her with his horns, recently.

A San Francisco paper devoted nearly four columns of a recent issue to an account of a local game of baseball.

An Ohio postmaster's name is Emancipation Proclamation Cogswell. He was born on the day the proclamation was issued.

Of the 515 consumptives under treatment at the London Royal Infirmary, 68 per cent. were formerly engaged in indoor occupations.

At Acworth, Ga., a few days ago, two cheerful idiots, about to enter into the bonds of matrimony, stood on a tombstone to be wedded.

A pear grown by a Butte county, Cal., orchardist is declared to measure 27 7-8 inches from "top to toe," and 14 3-4 inches around the "waist."

Cottonseed pressed into blocks, to be used in place of kindling wood, is one of the latest uses to which that which was once waste has been applied.

At the present rate, it would take the Supreme Court of the United States one hundred and thirty-three years to get through the cases on the calendar.

In Ellsworth, Me., the war between the partisans of local and standard time has been happily compromised by having the town clock show one time, and strike the other.

An inebriated citizen of Los Angeles ran his head in between the pickets of a fence, the other day, and was held in that uncomfortable position until released by a police officer.

All the saloons in New York were closed on Sunday so tightly that there were only two murders and one suicide reported as being committed on the premises of liquor dealers.

The city of Moscow boasts the largest apothecary establishment in the world. It employs over 400 laboratory and other assistants, and dispenses daily a thousand prescriptions.

A Savannah, Ga., paper concludes its notice of the death of a citizen by saying that "for a long time the deceased was the only man in Stewart county who wore a wooden leg."

A thief stopped in front of a Boston stove store, a few days ago, picked up a stove that was standing on the pavement, and quietly walked off with it without being apprehended.

Ninety thousand Russian liquor shops will be closed on the 1st of January, through the government's decision to allow the sale of liquor by retail only in hotels and eating-houses.

Newberry county, S. C., is proud in the possession of two children that cry for quinine and cod-liver oil, and, if these dainties are in the house will not go to sleep until they have been tasted.

Two thieves actually broke into the city prison at Plainfield, N. J., early on a recent Sunday morning, by cutting the glass from a window, and were escaping when they were discovered and captured.

The Bulgarian masons measure with a reed the shadow of the first person who passes the site of a new house after the foundation is dug, and they bury the reed underneath the wall to insure its stability.

St. Peter's Cathedral, just finished at Moscow, has five cupolas, and nine hundred pounds of gold was used in overlaying them. The doors of the temple cost $110,000, and the marble floors about $1,500,000.

A wish that his coffin, which he made three years ago, be painted in patriotic colors, the base red, the panels white, and the top blue, was made by a 94-year-old citizen of Pleasant Ridge, O., who died a few days ago.

A leading medical paper advocates the use of condemned criminals for cholera experiments. It shows that from three to four hundred persons are hanged annually in India, and thinks these might be spared the "final execution" should they survive the doctors' doses.

A little dog, owned by a Boston family, jumped upon a bed early one morning, recently, and set up a piercing howl, which awakened the sleepers, who found the house in flames. The slumberers had barely time to escape, and would, in all probability, have perished had it not been for the warning given by the dog.

One minute's imprisonment in jail was the punishment imposed recently on a man charged, in a Clarendon, Ark., court with having sold the products of land for which he had failed to pay the rent. The trial occupied several days, and upon the verdict being pronounced the condemned walked across the court room and placed himself in charge of the sheriff, who took him to the jail, where he served out one minute's time.

THE WORLD OF TO-DAY.

BY EASON RENNYSON.

A hearth upon our dark globe sighs after many a vanished face;
Many a planet by many a sun may roll with the dust of a vanished race.

Raving politics never at rest as this poor earth's pale history runs,
What is it but a trouble of ants in the glean of a million suns?

Lies upon this side, lies upon that side, truthless violence mourn'd by the wise;
Thousands of voices drowning his own in a popular torrent of lies upon lies.

Faith her zenith or all but lost in the gloom of doubts that darken the schools;
Craft with a bunch of all-heal in her hand follow'd up by her vassal legion of fools.

Stately purposes, valor in battle, glorious annals of army and fleet,
Death for the right cause, death for the wrong cause, triumpets of victory, groans of defeat.

Innocence seeghed in her mother's milk, and charity setting the martyr aflame,
Thraldom who walks with the banner of freedom, and reeks not to ruin a realm in her name.

What is it all if we all of us end but in being our own corpse coffins at last?
Swallowed in vastness, lost in silence, drowned in the deeps of a meaningless past.

Hunting in Cashmere.

BY E. W. M.

THERE are a few countries where there is a greater variety of game than in Cashmere.

I was stationed on the frontiers of Persia. I was in the civil engineers, and was employed in surveying the route of a proposed railway.

But the Government did not press us forward very much, funds not being forthcoming so rapidly as could be wished, so that I was often able to get leave of absence.

Luckily I had a very fair income of my own, with considerable prospects, so that I could afford to hunt in good style.

I liked hunting.

One day, accompanied by several servants and Gambo, an experienced traveller and guide, I started in search of some adventure.

It was my good fortune shortly after we had started to come across some wild horses, of whom out of curiosity, I shot a few.

The wild horse is about fourteen hands high at the shoulder, and resembles the ass rather than the more noble quadruped.

It is generally of a reddish gray, with a dark stripe down the back, and almost white under the belly.

Its head is very long and ugly.

They are found in large quantities in Persia, Afghanistan, and Cashmere.

Though very wild, they are to be tamed, and when taught to go in harness, will carry great weights.

My guide, Gambo, told me many stories of their endurance, adding, however, that they were very difficult to catch alive, and must be taken quite young.

Passing over a plain dense with bush and jungle, we came on a village, the dwelling-places of which were sheep-skin tents.

The people were very friendly and hospitable, and glad of a few small coins.

We sallied out the day following our arrival, and did fine business in yaks—fierce beasts, one of whom would make a stir if turned loose on a hot day in Fleet Street.

Suddenly I started as I heard the sound of horses' footsteps.

The country is, as a rule, quiet and safe, still; there are marauders about, who have to be treated with a high hand.

The new arrivals, however, proved to be a gentleman of some rank, a kind of small prince, as he called himself, Nadar Aga, with some few showily-dressed attendants. Gambo hurried up to act as interpreter; but the chief approaching, and seeing that I was a European, addressed me in very good French, asking me if I belonged to that country.

"I am English, and my name is Philip Warder, Highness," I answered.

He frowned slightly, as if the nationality was not agreeable to him; but he at once recovered himself.

"I am Nadar Aga," he said, in very fair English, "and have lived in your country some time. I was there several years ago."

I bowed.

"You must come to my residence," he went on courteously; "it is not far off."

I could only accept.

Hospitality is a great consideration among these people, and to refuse it when proferred is considered the very height of rudeness.

"You are too good," I answered; and turning to Gambo, I bade him bring up my horse.

Having mounted, the chief motioned for me to ride on his right hand, always considered an honor in the East.

We had only about a mile to go to the border of the lake, and there he showed me an island, on which was a castellated mansion in good preservation, but of a remote period.

The attendants took our horses, and then we descended a flight of steps to a handsome barge, without an awning.

We seated ourselves, and were rapidly taken to the island.

Though the climate is uncertain and very cold at times, the gardens were singularly rich and well laid out.

The palace, as it was called, was very plainly furnished; but the number of servants was out of all proportion to the needs.

No females were seen, though, of course, there was a harem or zenana.

But in the East it is not considered polite to ask after the women of a family, and I was well aware of this etiquette.

Ushering me into a rather large room, the Prince called some servants, and bade them take me to some rooms which he at once apportioned to me.

As I ascended the stairs leading upwards, I passed a black female slave, who hurried down with a look of something like terror.

I, however, pretended not to notice her, and no notice was taken.

In the room provided for me I found a change of raiment, a bath, and everything that a hunter or traveller could require.

I must say that the refreshment was very pleasant and welcome.

When I was ready, a domestic ushered me into the lower regions of the mansion, where I found a midday meal ready.

After the meal was over and the servants had retired—all save one—Nadar Aga, with a dry smile, ordered wine and some very excellent Irish whiskey to be placed before us.

He insisted that I should remain the night, and promised to let me enjoy a hunt on a large scale of the Cashmere goat in its wild state; the goat from the hair of which the celebrated Cashmere shawls are made.

He himself owned some very large farms where the domestic ones were reared and derived his chief revenue from them.

Still, there were plenty of wild ones in the hills and forests.

To me the very idea was a treat.

After smoking and drinking some time, Nadar Aga took me to my suite of apartments, where I found Gambo the faithful guide.

He told me that the owner of the island palace was considered a rich man, was certainly very influential, and that we were fortunate in having made him a firm friend.

I then turned in for a sleep, most refreshing after so long a day.

At a later hour we dined, and while enjoying the pleasure of tobacco and punch, witnessed the performances of certain dancing girls.

It is a stupid and monotonous affair, and had ceased to amuse me.

But among these Orientals conversation is not popular, while reading is entirely unknown.

Idlers, have, therefore, to invent amusements, without which they weary.

Later on, however, we found out that we were both chess-players, and this was at once a bond of union.

I was fortunately a rather tough player, and Nadar Aga was delighted.

Aided by the flowing bowl, we passed several pleasant hours, and about eleven I went to my very pleasant quarters.

Gambo was asleep; but the moment I entered he awakened.

As soon as we were alone, he pushed a rough kind of couch against the door—the couch on which he was to sleep himself—and secured us from intrusion.

Then he bowed low, with a grim smile, and took from his belt a letter.

It was written on coarse rice paper, and folded very roughly.

I took it in utter amazement.

Opening it, I saw at once it was written in English, but with a rough style and not a pen.

"Stranger," it said, "in this house a woman of your nation, if you are English, has been a prisoner for seventeen years. For herself she cares nothing.

"A long and weary residence in the vile harem has rendered her hard and callous. But she has a daughter, as yet young, beautiful, and innocent.

"If you are a good and brave man, try to serve her, for Heaven's sake!

"One line, accepting the charge, and I will arrange an interview. Write 'Yes' on this scrap, and one of my faithful attendants will arrange all the rest."

"Who gave you this?" I asked of Gambo.

"Black girl," answered the man, with a grin. "Come for answer to-morrow."

"Trust me," were the words I wrote, "I will do all that lies in my power."

I rose betimes, and heard from Gambo that he had delivered my answer to the black woman.

I knew that I was entering upon a terrible trial—running a fearful risk.

The least treachery would ruin all. Nadar Aga, who had a smattering of European education, was, of course, cunning to the last degree.

He could read and write, so all depended on the fidelity of an ignorant black slave.

Doubtless the unfortunate prisoner believed in her, and probably had cause to do so.

As a rule, however, zenanas are the abode of falsehood and treachery.

Still, once entering upon my undertaking, it was not in my nature to draw back.

Nothing, however, could be done that day.

I must pass the day in hunting.

The Prince, at a very early hour, had sent out beaters to drive the game towards the lake.

They were to be found in narrow valleys and gulleys in the hills, whence they came down to feed.

Except as game they are not much esteemed, but they are plucky, bold, and make wonderful leaps.

The male will defend the female and young to the last gasp until shot down.

As soon as the early morning meal was over,—excellent coffee, broiled fish, and such-like provender,—the Aga prepared for action.

He and some six of his principal men entered the boat with myself and Gambo, and were put on shore.

I may as well mention that I had sent for my canoe, not knowing how useful it might prove, and it had reached the landing-place.

I gave a private command to Gambo, and then was at the orders of Nadar Aga.

We landed, and, taking up our positions in a thicket near by, we prepared for action.

We could already hear the conches and tom-toms in the distance driving the game.

Presently a large number of them debouched on the plain.

They were splendid creatures, some of the males being truly magnificent.

To escape the noise, din, and clatter, they made for the water, but were met by a ruthless and cruel volley.

Several fell.

One fine buck that I had wounded dashed past me, and in a moment was over the bank, swimming for dear life.

I rushed to my canoe, bade Gambo paddle in his usual admirable manner, and started in pursuit.

The fine animal had a good start.

Though not such a perfect swimmer as a deer, he made excellent headway.

His destination was, I saw at once, the island, parts of which were still somewhat wild and wooded.

I bade Gambo hurry on as fast as he could, sighting my gun as I did so.

Soon the goat touched ground, and made for the shore, desperate, and probably hopeful of success.

But my Nimrodic instincts overcame all other considerations, and I fired.

The animal fell dead upon the bank.

There was not much hunting after that, as far as Cashmere goats were concerned; but the Aga gave me some very fine bird shooting, which lasted until the hour of the midday meal.

This was a very splendid affair.

After it was over, I was again conducted to my chamber, where I found Gambo awaiting me, with a veiled female.

She was the black slave whom he had already mentioned.

She placed her finger on her lips, and then bade me follow.

I obeyed without hesitation.

I had complete faith in the writer of the letter.

The woman took me along a narrow passage for some distance, when she halted before what appeared to be a solid stone wall.

She touched some mysterious spring, and at once there was a gap.

She entered, and motioning me to follow, closed the aperture behind.

We were in a gloomy passage, shabbily carpeted, and our steps were silent as death.

We advanced a few yards, and then she motioned me to remain still. Then she disappeared behind a heavy curtain.

In a moment more it was lifted, and I passed through into a handsomely furnished room, where was seated a lady in a rich Oriental costume.

The slave-girl bowed and retired.

"Come hither!" said a sad, sweet voice from the couch at the end. I neared her, and saw at once that the speaker was naturally very beautiful though sorrow and suffering had marred her features much.

"You are kind to come," she went on when I had seated myself; "you are the first English-speaking person I have seen for years. I had a companion in my daughter's governess, but she is dead. But I must not waste time. You will hear my story?"

"Certainly," was my grave answer.

"Eighteen years ago," she began, "I was young and good-looking, people said. Nay, do not interrupt to flatter. It was flattery" she bitterly added, "that was my ruin."

I simply bowed.

"I was not rich, but I was well connected and moved in good society," she continued. "My suitors were many, but for a long time I was heart-whole. Then I was introduced to an attache of the Persian embassy. He was a very handsome young man.

"He told me that he was a Greek Christian and had been a slave; but was now free, and raised to honor," she went on. "He told me a wondrous and pitiful tale, which I believed. Then by degrees he began to win my heart. But from the first the affair was clandestine. In his wily ways, and tenderly-expressed wishes, I kept our engagement a secret.

"At last I fled with him, was married in some strange chapel," she said, with painful emphasis, "and I came here to find myself in the zenana of a Mussulman, one of many slaves."

"Shameful!" I cried.

"Yes; but I was helpless," she answered. "For some time he treated me not unkindly. Then came the birth of my child, after which I was neglected for others, relegated among the old women of the harem. I cared not. But by degrees, as my daughter grew up, a new interest arose.

"I must live for her.

"I knew what her fate would be unless I could find some means of escape. When her governess was brought here I began to hope, but nothing came of it. She died, and was buried in the lake.

"Ada is now fifteen, and already her father is talking of giving her to a young friend of his," she went on, in a tone of bitter anguish. "You must save her."

"How?" I asked.

"Nobody would ever suspect me of attempting to fly," she continued. "I have no money, and know nothing of the country, I, therefore, enjoy considerable liberty, have my boat, and go on the lake when I like.

"When you go, we can arrange her escape. Taking your departure to some distance, you can conceal your retinue, and return in the boat in which I saw you today.

"The moon will be down two evenings later at midnight. Half an hour later will you be here?" she asked, persuasively.

"I will."

"And you will take my darling, my blessed treasure, to her friends she urged.

"I will," was my solemn response.

"In a few moments you shall see her," was her continued speech; "but first let me give you these. They are diamonds of great value, which you can get her friends to sell. I had two hundred a year in my own right, which someone else owns now. All think Dora Warder dead."

"Great Heaven!" I cried. "Are you my lost Aunt Dora? Can it be possible?"

"You are little Philip?" she gasped.

"That is my name," I answered, wildly.

"God is just," she said. "This is indeed miraculous. I will call your cousin."

"Aunt Dora," I interposed, "before she comes, remember you must come along with us."

I had a hard task to persuade her; but finally she agreed, and then clapped her hands.

A beautiful girl, the most lovely being I had ever seen entered blushing.

"Ada, my darling, by a marvellous interposition of Providence," said the elder lady, "the gentleman who is willing to aid us turns out to be your Cousin Philip, of whom I have often spoken. Embrace, my children."

Ada blushed furiously; but she made no resistance, and there briefly all the details of the escape were arranged.

Then I parted from them, being led back to my rooms by the negress.

There was not much sleep for me that afternoon; but assuming as careless a demeanor as I could, I rejoined the chief towards evening, as if nothing had happened.

Next day we went out deer-shooting, and had varied success; but my heart was no longer in the business.

I was thinking of the marvellous adventure in the wilds of Cashmere, and of its probable results.

Return to England I must, as no part of Asia would be safe after the abduction.

Nadar Aga was very chatty that evening. He never noticed the similarity of name to that of his supposed wife.

He, however, was exceedingly jovial; told stories of London and Paris.

Again I retired.

I was to start on my return journey early next day.

We parted in the morning after an early meal, with apparent cordiality, I hoping from my heart never to see the false traitor again.

I traveled for an hour, until we reached a very retired wood near the lake, where I and Gambo halted.

The native we sent forward to notify my people to be ready to start at a moment's notice.

This done, I revealed my secret to Gambo.

He was quite ready to accompany me to England.

As soon as the moon was low we started in the boat.

We were well armed, as we fully intended to die sooner than be taken.

But the chances of discovery were not great.

They had nothing to fear in that secluded island, so that no real watch was kept.

Half an hour after midnight we were at the foot of the water-steps of the harem. Three cloaked figures at once appeared on the verandah.

Not a word was spoken as I helped them all into my boat, which was at once impelled at a rapid rate along the lake.

Reaching my camp, the women were at once mounted on my horses, while we walked behind them.

Three hours later we were in camp. Gambo went at once to the village, and bought three extra horses.

He found no difficulty in obtaining them.

Not a moment was lost, nor did we take much rest until my charges were in the house of an English lady in Shemaa, in Persia.

After a long rest and change of raiment, we again started, nor stopped much until we were on board a Persian steamer.

The intense surprise of her relatives on seeing Aunt Dora—Mrs. Nadar, we called her—may be conceived.

She was warmly received, and her property restored to her.

Two years later beautiful Nadar Aga came up to me and offered his hand, with a smile.

I rejected it.

"I will expose you everywhere in the clubs," were my words. "You are a cowardly abductor. Leave England at once."

He hurried away with a scowl. I never saw him again.

So much for hunting in Cashmere.

A JUSTICE in Georgia recently undertook to marry two couples at once and married both women to one of the men before he was aware of the fact. He afterwards got the matter straightened out to the satisfaction of the contracting parties.

THREE-fourths of the officers in the German army wear corsets.

Marah.

BY OLIVE BELL.

MRS. AUGUSTINE MACRAY belonged to the upper stratum of Boston society.

She was the widow of a millionaire, a fragile little creature, with purity of birth, breeding and morals indelibly stamped on her patrician features.

Her ivory white complexion contrasted well with her blue black hair, slightly threaded with silver, but there was a queer hunted look in the lovely Irish-gray eyes, that was often the subject of comment. But then, people of unquestionable blue blood often imagine strange things, especially if the object of their suspicions be a woman whose natural reticence and exclusiveness hold society at a respectful distance.

She was a widow when Mr. Macray married her, once the wife of a good and honorable man, who had married her while on a European tour, whether of high or low degree, nobody but himself knew; although many had been the attempts to penetrate the mystery—if mystery there was—that shadowed this lovely woman's early years.

She was the mother of a four-year-old boy, the idol of his mother's heart, for there were no children by her second marriage.

Gerald, the only son, grew up a great strong graceful Samson of a man, inheriting his strength and beauty from the good old Puritan stock that gave birth to his ancestors. For the Reeds had always been a handsome race, and Gerald was no disgrace to the name.

One summer stood out distinct from all other summers in Gerald Reed's life—a summer he would never remember but with a passion of regret.

It was one long dream of delight spent in one of the wildest and most mountainous resorts, a cool, white-cottage hamlet, odorous with the resinous scent of the mammoth pines that clustered in gray, shadowy clumps around the base of the mountain.

Gerald Reed was the life and strength of the little party of tourists, even as Marah Channing, an orphan and an heiress, was the siren that charmed every heart in that sleepy mountain town; not with gay or dashing piquancy, but with a gentle frankness, that seemed born of the pure, unaffected spirit of the woman, for she was not a girl, but as old, if not older, than Gerald Reed.

They were inseparable friends. From the first they had been mutually attracted toward each other.

To use Gerald's own expression, she seemed a second edition of his mother; and in Gerald's eyes, his mother was the one perfect woman in the world.

But while Mrs. Macray's face wore the placid calm of trials conquered, Marah Channing's seemed the embodiment of unadulterated happiness.

The small fragile figure was buoyant with grace and suppleness, the white, perfectly moulded face, was as pure as a lily, and the blue-black hair curled over the high brow was the exact shade of Mrs. Macray's, without the threads of silver. Even the beautiful Irish-gray eyes, only different in a flash of gladness which beautified the whole face, were but counterparts of the thoughtful gray orbs that looked at you from under Mrs. Macray's silken lashes.

"You are as much alike as two peas," declared Gerald Reed, as he lay on the velvety turf at Marah's feet, discussing the resemblance. "I wish I could see mother and you side by side."

Marah smiled—and Marah's smile was something worth winning—and looked down at the strong, bronzed man staring up at her.

His was a face any woman might trust, a strong, frank, truthful face, and her long lashes drooped under the ardent gaze of the honest brown eyes.

That Gerald Reed was passionately in love, was no secret to Marah Channing, although he had never put it into words.

For although not an impressible man, something in the pure, generous nature of this woman, held a magnetic attraction for him, and now, as they had reached that border-land, a step from the pleasant plains of friendship into the more elysian fields of love, he knew that he never had, or would love any woman, as he loved Marah Channing.

"Marah," he began, after feasting his eyes on her drooping face for many minutes "I want to ask you a question. Why did they call you Marah, a name prophetic of exceeding bitterness."

For one moment a flush mounted to the white forehead.

"Ah!" she said, in a low sad voice, "I cannot tell you. That has been the one regret of my life—name and parentage are both unknown to me."

"The Channings adopted you when a little child, then?"

"Yes, almost a babe."

"Did they never speak of your parents, then?" asked Gerald, in some surprise, although not a shadow of doubt crossed his mind as to the purity of Marah Channing's birth.

"Never!" answered Marah, with a deep sigh. "I never looked for love, or care, or tenderness, but they said I would know when the proper time came, who my real parents were."

"Marah;" he rose slowly to his feet, and stood at her side. He rested one hand lightly on her shoulder, and looked down at her sweet face, over which red flushes were slowly creeping. "I want to ask you another question."

How well he remembered that scene in after years.

The little village, at the foot of the mountain, bathed in the bright sunshine of a golden September day, bees droning over fields of blossoming clover, birds twittering in the lofty trees around them, and the numerous fall of pine needles, were sights and sounds that came to him sleeping or waking.

Every living thing in nature was instinct with life, love, and happiness, and every pulse in his strong healthy body thrilled with the fulness of passion.

Somehow his hand slid down until it clasped her waist, and he could feel the supple form tremble at his touch.

"Marah,"—there was a break in his voice as he paused, for your true man is too intensely noble to imagine every woman he chances to honor with a few friendly attentions, loves him, and he was in doubt as to Marah Channing's affections, for she was too modest and self-possessed to betray her feelings—"Marah, will you be my wife?"

He clasped her closer, and she did not resist.

Her crimson face was hid on his breast, but he put his hand under her chin, and raising it, gazed down into her sweet eyes, as if he would devour her. "Tell me!" he said, impatiently.

"Oh!"—she hid her face—"I cannot!"

"You cannot?" He gave her a dozen kisses, for passion had overmastered his usual prudence. "You must! You know you love me—I see it in your face, Marah. Do you not?"

"Yes yes," she assented faintly, lifting her eyes, full of shy gladness, to his earnest face. "But, Gerald, I am older than you; and then your mother might object to a daughter, whose parentage might not, if known, be equal to yours."

"Nonsense!" he laughed, in his cheerful, assuring tones; "if those are your only objections, I am sure of you. Why, I am older than my years, Marah, a very patriarch in wisdom. Mother is too wise to object to anything that will be for my happiness. Now yes or no, Marah?"

Marah's answer was 'yes,' for her heart had gone out to him, weeks before, and if her joy was not so demonstrative as her lover's, it was deeper and more quietly passionate.

"My happiness will be complete when mother welcomes you as her daughter elect," said Gerald, as she nestled in his arms.

Poor Gerald! His heart, although stirred to its uttermost depths with love for the woman of his choice, never wavered in its allegiance to that mother, who, by a few bitter, but too truthful words, was to dash his cup of happiness from his lips.

"May I write for her to join us here, Marah?"

Marah consented, and that very day Gerald wrote a few lines to his mother, telling her of his engagement, but omitted to mention the name of his future wife, and urged her to come and spend a few days in the out-of-the-way, but charming little village.

Mrs. Macray read his note seated in the luxurious breakfast room of her Boston home.

She laid it down beside her plate, wondering what this matchless woman was like, who had won her son.

She sighed—she had always been first in his affections—and murmured—

"Well, it is only what I had a right to expect. He is twenty-five, and if she——"

She broke off abruptly, and her lovely, peaceful face, was convulsed a moment, as if from secret pain.

"Oh, if he knew, if he knew, how he would despise me."

The evening shadows were deepening in the pines when the lumbering old stage rolled up to the door of the "Mountain House," where Mrs. Macray was warmly welcomed by her handsome son.

"When you have had some refreshments, mother, and feel rested, I will take you to my future wife," said Gerald, as he kissed his little mother on both cheeks. "She's your very image, only a little fresher and lovelier."

"Your very image!"

The words rang in her ears, as she changed her traveling dress for a plain black silk—she never allowed her maid to accompany her on these little informal trips—and a strange feeling of coming evil stole over her.

Was it the atmosphere, or was it some memory rising up out of that hidden past, that tortured her? Alas, she could not tell.

She drank a little tea, ate a little, then went to the window that overlooked a vast stretch of woodland in the rear of the house.

The clouds were black and lowering, scarred now and then with streaks of vivid lightning.

The air was filled with the rumbling of distant thunder, and the wind sought through the pines, with moans that sounded like some lost soul in distress.

She turned away from the scene with a shudder.

"What ails me?" she sighed; "the ride has upset my nerves, or, something dreadful is going to happen."

"Mother," called Gerald's voice, from the corridor, "are you ready?"

"Yes, Gerald," she said, trying to feign a cheerfulness she did not feel, as she went out to him.

"Don't be frightened, mother," he said, tenderly, "This is only a mountain storm. They are usually of short duration."

Marah Channing occupied a neat parlor, opening out of her bedroom. She had beautified it with her own hands, and when Mrs. Macray entered it, she was so struck by the home-like and artistic taste displayed in the tiny lamp-lit room, that she did not observe the small, white-robed figure standing beside a low table, littered with feminine fancy work, until Gerald's voice aroused her.

"Marah, this is my mother—mother, Marah Channing."

Mrs. Macray stood a moment as if carved to stone. Miss Channing, with hot flushes on her cheek, stood with outstretched hand, but the elder woman made no attempt to take it. Gerald looked at his mother in amazement. A cold, steel-like glitter was gathering in the gray eyes, the thin lips were quivering, as if some terrible words were about to be spoken.

At last they came.

"Channing, daughter of Miles Channing of Baltimore?" she questioned with a metallic ring in her voice.

Marah's face lost its lovely rose flush, and her hand dropped to her side.

Gerald answered his mother's question.

"No, mother, an adopted daughter. Miles Channing had no children of his own, but Marah was the child of his love," he said gently, grieved at the troubled look on Marah's face.

Mrs. Macray's face flushed a deep crimson, and her eyes flashed ominously.

She laughed a laugh not pleasant for her son to hear.

He stared at her, wondering if she had lost her senses, for in all his life, he had never seen his mother other than a calm, gentle, well-bred woman, with kindly words for rich or poor.

"She, Gerald, she was the child of his love. You can never marry Marah Channing."

"Why?"

Gerald's face was white with doubt; even as Marah's blanched with a nameless fear.

"I love her, mother; she loves me."

"Oh! I know—I know!" cried Mrs. Macray, clasping her small slender hands. "But, my son, she can never be your wife!"

"Why?" said Gerald, grasping her arm almost fiercely. "Tell me why? Do you not see Marah's distress."

Mrs. Macray gazed from one to the other, in a helpless, pitiful way.

How could she tell them?

Drag that long buried sin to the light, bare her poor weak cowardly soul to the eyes of the son who thought her stainless.

For she had been weak, and her cowardice alone had prevented her from atoning for the wrong committed so many years ago.

She alone had been the sufferer then, now two innocent creatures must go down into the very ashes of shame and despair for her folly.

"Because"—to his dying hour Gerald never forgot the pathos and pain in his mother's voice. "God help you both—you are the children of the same mother!"

Gerald Reed shivered as if a cold wind had struck him.

No face was ever more rigid in its suppressed pain than his.

Marah Channing drooped like some storm-tossed lily, and dropped into low chair, without a word.

She bowed her face in her hands, and by the agony of his own heart, Gerald measured hers.

He turned away from his mother, half in loathing, half in pity.

She seemed to divine his thoughts, and laid a detaining hand on his arm.

"Do not hate me, Gerald; my sin has brought its punishment. For your sake, I kept my secret. God knows I never dreamt of this result. My heart bleeds for you, my children, for you are mine!"

"Tell us your story," commanded Gerald, in a voice so changed that his mother scarcely recognized it.

She was too weak to stand, and knelt down on the floor, with her hand clasped on her breast.

The wind soughed wildly without, as if in mockery at the sorrow within.

There was no sound in the room, save Gerald's heavy breathing, as she told her story.

"Listen to me. I was very young, the orphan child of rich parents. My guardian sent me to school in Paris. There I met two young Americans, Miles Channing and your father, Gerald. I fell madly in love with Channing. He was a cruel, heartless man of the world, but I could not see it then. I eloped with him, went through a false marriage, and after he left me in a convent in Switzerland, Marah was born. I had plenty of money, and leaving you with the good nuns, I wandered through Italy, weak and ill, and stunned by shame and sorrow. Almost a year after I met Gerald Reed again, and suspecting something wrong, he urged me to tell him my story. He heard it, comforted and finally won my consent to be his wife. He never reproached me for my sin, Gerald! Be as merciful as him!"

"Oh, I cannot—I cannot," groaned Gerald. "Mother, why did you not acknowledge Marah?"

"Because I was ashamed! After you were born, Gerald, I could not bear the thoughts of bringing home the child of my sin. I sent money to the convent, but it was returned, as the good sisters wrote to me, that an American couple, Miles Channing and wife, from Baltimore, had adopted my little daughter. Marah, did you do not know in what bitterness of spirit I named you Marah!"

She arose to her feet, and laid her hand on the bowed head of Marah Channing.

"Be brother and sister——"

Marah sprang to her feet, and dashed her hand aside.

The lovely face was transformed with a passion of despair.

"God forgive you; I never can!" she wailed, walking past Gerald with a white averted face.

She went out into the storm and darkness of the night, bare-headed and unseen, and must have walked straight into the jaws of death, for at break of day some laborers found her lying at the foot of a precipice, her garments sodden with rain, and the poor white face bruised from contact with the jagged rocks.

With reverent hands they carried the lifeless body back to the inn.

Great was the sorrow and consternation when she was laid down in the dainty room, that but yesterday had been filled with the sunshine of her presence.

A group of weeping women were pushed aside, as Gerald Reed strode into the room.

He was haggard with a night of misery, with his struggle to kill an unholy love, and bending over the face, that but a few hours ago had blushed beneath his passionate kisses, he pressed his lips on bruised cheek and brow, and left her to her last sleep, murmuring—

"In heaven there is no sin!"

Mrs. Macray was the only calm spectator in the house.

Gerald left the village that very hour—left her without a word of farewell or pardon.

Her deathly white face never lost its well bred calm, and under her directions, Marah's body was coffined and sent home to Baltimore.

What she suffered then, and in the years that followed, none but God ever knew!

Marah's death, like her birth, was always a mystery.

Gerald Reed never looked on his mother's face again.

But night and day, in far off lands, he strives to forget the woman who was the child of his mother, and the idol of his mad, idolatrous love.

Their Last Quarrel.

BY PIPKIN.

FIVE school-girls, bright-eyed and merry-voiced, were huddled about a great fire in the otherwise deserted school-room at a Seminary not far from the town.

The roaring winds outside only made the fire seem the cheerier.

And, these five girls were so glad to see each other again, now that the holidays were over, that no amount of cold could dampen their spirits.

They had been "chums" ever since they first entered the school; sometimes a quarrel occurred, and they paired off, with pretty Mattie Banner on both sides; but it only lasted a little while, and the "Five-umvirate," as Fanny Decker always called it, went on as smoothly as ever.

Clarissa Graw was the oldest and most studious. Ella the handsomest, Mattie the most amiable, Nettie the most stylish, and Fanny—well, Fanny was the dearest. A wild elf she was, the fourth child of a family of ten, who were all good-natured and happy, but none like Fanny—"Flighty Fan," as her tall, favorite cousin nicknamed her years ago.

They had abbreviated it into "Flighty," and thus she remained Flighty Decker. Not a teacher in the school was there who did not reprove her at least once a week, and as she did so, sigh for a small share of the girl's spirits.

But to return to that January evening. They were eating apples, and Flighty, having peeled hers, was decorating with the red, unbroken paring the hair hair of Mattie, who sat at her feet.

She did not speak (quite unusual for her) but listened quietly to the others.

"Papa gave me some diamond ear-drops," Ella was saying. "You cannot imagine how surprised I was, girls! Christmas morning, at breakfast table, they lay in a blue velvet case by my plate."

"Oh, pshaw!" interrupted Nettie. "I wanted diamond ear-drops, but papa said I am too young, so he gave me two lovely bracelets, fine gold snakes, with large diamond eyes, almost as good as ear-drops."

"Was that all you received?" asked little Mattie, innocently turning her head so that a long string of red paring fell over her ear, at which Flighty laughed in the most approved school-girl fashion.

"Oh, mercy, no!" cried Ella and Nettie together. "I had——"

"Young ladies," cried Flighty, "do wait. Mattie, love, run for my note-book, so that I may mark them down."

Dead silence; one of the "tiffs" imminent.

"I had a pair of beautiful skates," said Mattie's soft voice, "and tan-colored, six-button ed gloves, and a box of bon bons."

"That was not much. I don't call those nice Christmas gifts,' interrupted Ella.

"Dear me, don't you?" and Flighty wound the cold apple skin around Mattie's neck, making her jump and scream. "Was Santa Claus at your house, Cad?"

"Yes," replied Clarissa, with rising color, "although Ella may scarcely call what he left Christmas gifts. I have a beautiful volume of Schiller, and the Latin Dictionary I have wished for so long, and ——"

"Well," laughed Nettie, "if you don't name the strangest things! Papa gave me the dictionary as soon as I asked for it."

"Bother!" cried Flighty. "I beat you all. My Christmas gift (I got but one worth mentioning) is brighter than your diamonds, more durable than skates and gloves, will afford more pleasure than Latin or German, and is all in one parcel, received by Miss Frances Decker at eight o'clock on Christmas Eve."

"Why, Flighty!" cried all four.

"True as fate itself!"

"What was it? What could it be? Do tell us Flighty!" they chorused.

"Well, be quiet, and I will," answered the heroine of the hour, genially, and a little patronizingly. "Did you ever hear of my cousin, Parke Ingraham?"

"Doctor Ingraham? I should think so!" exclaimed Ella. "Papa thinks the world of him, for he saved my little brother's life when three other doctors had failed."

"Yes, he is a wonderful doctor," said his cousin, complacently. "Well, he and his mother, Aunt Evelyn who is my father's cousin really, live all alone in Clinton Rod. I spent my holidays with them, for father and mother and the youngsters went out to grandma's, and she didn't want me; I'm too noisy; so Aunt Evelyn kept me. And he—Cousin Parke, I mean—is my Christmas gift; he asked me to marry him when I've finished school."

"Oh, Flighty!"

Awed silence followed, broken only by a giggle from the engaged young lady.

"How did he say it, Fan?" asked Martie, cautiously, after a while.

"I'll tell you. It was Jolly. We're not in love, you know—no such nonsense. He is so much older than I, that I used to call him Noah. Scene one was in Aunt Evelyn's drawing-room; time, eight o'clock Christmas eve. Actors, Aunt Evelyn asleep in one corner (and she didn't wake up for an hour, either), Parke, and your humble servant."

"He, pathetically glancing at Aunt Evelyn, 'Flighty, I wonder who'll take care of me when my mother is gone?'

"'Don't know,' inconsolably.

"'Did you ever take care of anybody?'

"'No, indeed! Found it hard enough to keep myself straight.

"'I should hate to be a bachelor.'

"'Hum!'

"'Should you like to be an old maid?'

"'Well—no; I think not.'

"'If we were married,' insinuatingly, 'I should not be a bachelor, nor you an old maid.'

"'One word for me and two for yourself, as if I'd marry an antediluvian like you!'

"'Seriously, Fanny, I like you more than any other young lady I know. And I want you to promise me that when my mother can be with me no longer, and I need a wife, that you will be my wife.'

"'I no 'spudonee.'

"'Promise Flighty.'

"'Ask me again, if you really want me, when you do need me; and then, if there isn't anybody younger, and gayer, and better looking, and less impudent than you—why, I'll consider it.'"

"Did you really say that, Flighty?" asked Ella, quite awe-struck.

"How dared you, Fan?" murmured Martie, taking her hand protectingly.

"Oh, I'm quite safe, thank you!" laughed the young girl.

"But not really engaged?" added Nettie.

"The bell!" came from all at this juncture.

And rising, they repaired to their apartments.

But they never forgot that talk around the fire, or Flighty's peculiar engagement to her grave cousin, Doctor Ingraham.

* * * * * *

Three years passed.

The "Five-unvirate" was dissolved: Clarissa was earning a handsome income as an artist; Nettie had married and become a leader of fashion; Ella, whose mother was dead, was now the stately, handsome mistress of her father's mansion; Fanny had been bridesmaid successively to her three eldest sisters, and was now, to use her own expression, "nursery-maid, governess, and elder sister all in one," to the remaining six children.

But Martie, dear little Martie died.

That was the saddest of all, and grief made a woman of Fanny.

At first she could not be comforted; but time accomplished at last what it always will, and the girl became her own light-hearted self, but a woman.

It was little Harry Andrews' birthday, and Ella, always thoughtful for the children, prepared an afternoon party for him, asking only two grown people—Fanny, who came to look after her brothers and sisters, and Doctor Ingraham, without whom, to Harry's notion, a party was not worth having.

When the doctor came, Ella and Fanny were standing together just outside a heavy crimson *portiere*, and as Ella advanced to meet him she discovered that her friend was gone.

After a moment she said, "Fanny has disappeared; she was here a moment since. Of course you want to see her?"

"Yes," the doctor replied slowly; "I have not seen Fanny since I returned, for when we arrived my cousin was visiting in London, and, as you know, did not get home until yesterday."

"But you corresponded and that is almost the same," added Ella.

"Oh, no! Mother and Uncle Decker corresponded; that is all."

Miss Andrews elevated her handsome eyebrows in surprise.

"You look astonished," laughed Doctor Ingraham. "Have you heard that story of my being engaged to Fanny? But it was only a joke. Come, Ella, those merry children are playing blind man's buff, and as we are at their party we must play too. Perhaps Fanny will reappear."

"Much you care for Fanny!" muttered a low voice behind the *portiere* as they both moved off. "Only a joke, Parke Ingraham, indeed! We'll see!"

The doctor was caught and blindfolded, and as soon as that was accomplished Fanny walked serenely out and stood by the mantel, one white hand held out to the fire.

Her eyes were cast demurely down, and the next she knew two strong hands caught and held her.

She struggled violently, and in the contest the kerchief became loosened and fell to the floor.

And Doctor Ingraham found himself with one arm half-round a slight girlish form, his hand upon a mass of soft, dark hair.

Such a dainty creature! Her brown velveteen dress suited her small white face perfectly. A huge bunch of crimson roses fastened in her belt gave color to her dress, and matched in tone the curved mouth.

Her hair and eyebrows were very dark; but the large eyes, fringed by dark lashes, were clearest gray.

"I am to kiss you, am I not?" he asked, laughing. "Is not that in the game?"

"You kiss me if you dare, Noah!"

The same face took a saucy look, the gray eyes flashed fire, and in this aspect he could not help recognizing her.

"Flighty!"

She gave a sudden twist, amidst the laughter that followed, and walked deliberately away.

The doctor kept as near as possible to her all the afternoon; her pert ways were too fascinating for him to resist.

And then, at dark, he escorted her and the children home and spent the evening there.

When he bade her good night he made up his mind to win her for his wife.

One bright day, only three days before Christmas, the doctor, having spent nearly two hours in selecting a diamond ring for which he knew Fanny was longing, repaired homeward and found the saucy object of his meditations coolly drinking tea and eating buttered toast with his mother.

"Oh, doctor" she cried as he entered. (She had not called him Parke once since his return) "I am so glad to see you! I can stay an hour longer, and you will take me home; won't he, Aunt Evelyn?"

"To be sure I will," Parke answered for himself. "And now, Fanny, will you please give me some tea?"

"Would like to, son, but laziness prevents me. There is the cup directly under the spout, and at your elbow."

He helped himself silently.

The hour she stayed put him in misery, and he was more glad than sorry when she donned her wraps and started.

Fanny chatted incessantly for a time, but at last Parke spoke.

"Fanny, you will let me say a few words——"

"Two or three dozen, if you like."

"But it is something of the greatest importance to me, and——"

"Goodness, Noah, don't frighten me!"

"Can't you call me Parke, Fanny?"

"Couldn't, possibly. Make haste with what you have to say. We are almost home, and unless you want to tell others that secret you must talk fast."

"How can I talk fast?" he asked, disconsolately. Who ever heard of a girl hurrying a proposal so? Fanny, I love you, and want you for my wife."

Dead silence, broken only by hurried breaths from Parke, then Fanny's red mouth curved scornfully.

"I am afraid you will get tired of waiting," she said slowly and bitterly; then, struck by the pained look in his eyes, she went on, "You do not really need a wife, Parke, and if you did, you need not feel obliged to ask me, for there are many girls who would be better wives than I could be."

"But listen! I love you, my dearest——"

"Now, don't! Didn't we agree, three years ago, never to believe such nonsense? It's all trash!"

"Flighty, you belong to me!" he cried, thoroughly aroused by the saucy defiance on the small face. "Did you not promise me that on Christmas Eve, three years ago?"

She laughed scornfully.

"Did you believe that story of our engagement—that little joke of ours? Fie, Parke!—I did think you had better sense!"

Where had he heard those words before? But Fanny had mounted the steps, pulling him after her.

"Will you ring the bell? Do you want to come in to night, doctor?"

"Not to night, thank you. Ah, the door is opened. Good night, Fanny."

He held out his hand, drawn hastily from its warm glove, and she put her fingers in it.

"Good night yourself, Noah. And please forget about that old joke."

He raised his hat, and she entered the hall, and was lost to view.

Fanny saw neither the doctor nor his mother until the day before Christmas, when a note came from Aunt Evelyn, stating that Parke was called away, and would probably not be home until the next morning, and she begged Fanny to spend the night with her.

She went round in the afternoon, and had a cheerful talk with Aunt Evelyn before tea, and a game of chess after; then Aunt Evelyn grew tired.

Fanny accompanied her quietly up to her room, did all she could to make her comfortable, promised to go directly to her own chamber, and then went back to the drawing-room, where the coziness of the fire tempted her to kneel before it.

Soon a huddled bunch of mouse-colored costume was lying on the bright rug, the red ribbons becoming dangerously loose, the small hands thrown over the curly dark head, while Fanny thought.

"I am sorry, dear," Aunt Evelyn had said that evening. "I wanted you so much for my daughter. And then Parke's heart is almost broken. But of course I know you are not to blame for not loving him."

"Parke's heart is almost broken! A hard thing, Fanny knew; she thought her own would break when Martie died; but surely he would ask her again. But if he did not—Fanny's heart throbbed, and to drive such ideas away she began to recite the multiplication table.

"Half-past eleven," said Doctor Ingraham as he stood under the chandelier in the hall and put his latch-key in his pocket. "Much earlier than I hoped to be home."

Then, without removing his cloak, his hat still in hand, he went into the drawing-room; the lights were very low, but the fire burned cheerfully, playing on a huge mouse, it seemed, in front of it.

Parke recognized the mouse at a glance: Fanny's dark hair, escaped from its crimson ribbon, was lying on her shoulders in pretty confusion while she slept.

He knelt beside her, lifted her head to his knee, and sat there patiently ten minutes longer, until she awoke.

"Parke!" she laughed, sat up straight, and rubbed her eyes. "Is it merry Christmas yet?"

"Not quite," he answered, holding out his watch. "I ought to scold you for going to sleep here, but it is too near Christmas for that. What do you hope Santa Claus brings you?"

"A diamond ring,"—very promptly.

Parke fumbled in his vest pocket, and produced a tiny package.

"Flighty," he said gently, "will you take this? I bought it in hopes that you would take the giver with the ring; but that cannot be, so I wish you would take it—from your cousin."

Fanny looked at him, at the box, at the fire, then at him again, and burst into tears.

"Why Flighty, don't, oh, don't!" he cried. "Tell me what ails you, or—or I shall give you something very bitter for your nerves."

"No, you won't Noah!" she sobbed "It's too bad of you, Parke. I don't want your ring."

"Well, well, you need not take it, Fan," he said soothingly.

"But—but I do want it—awfully!" sobbed Fanny, hysterically.

Parke was at his wits' end; he remained in silence until he could bear her sobs no longer, when in sheer desperation he said, "What do you want, Fanny?"

"I want—want the ring—and——" Silence at this juncture for a full minute, then, with a great sob, "And I want you, too, Parke!"

He took her hands and pulled them from her face, his own white with emotion.

"Fanny,"—his voice trembled slightly—"I wish you would say it again, but I know you will not, so I ask you once more, will you be my wife?"

But if she had answered rationally she would not have been our Flighty.

With a fresh burst of tears she held out her hand and pointed to the box, saying inconsistently, "Put it on."

When he complied, she wiped her eyes and then held up her mouth invitingly: and as he kissed her the clock in the adjoining room struck twelve, and Aunt Evelyn, in dressing-gown and slippers, opened the door softly, only to retreat again; for it seemed to her as if her tall son and the saucy, dark-eyed Flighty had "made up" their last quarrel on that eve before merry Christmas was born.

He Found It.—At a recent *seance* a thought-reader boasted that he could find a marked pin hidden by one of the audience. Several came forward among whom was a confederate. The pin was hidden by a Trinity student in an adjoining room, in the presence of the committee, among which was the said confederate. The student suspecting this man from his looks, slily took away the pin from its hiding-place. On the return to the platform the thought-reader gazed in the hider's face, and putting his hand to his brow, was blindfolded, and led the student to the hiding-place, but of course found no pin. He returned, acknowledging his defeat, and looking daggers at his confederate. "Now, gentlemen," said the student, "I'll undertake to say if this diviner of the human mind will do as I tell him, half the audience, without a single hint from me, will know where the pin is," and, turning to the thought-reader, he said: "Sit down." He did so. There was a yell, and, jumping up, the thought-reader hastily pulled out the marked pin.

The Duke's "Artful Dodge."—When the British army was on the march in Spain, its commander sometimes called on the ecclesiastical authorities, who conducted him over the churches and cathedrals. "It is a noble building," Lord Wellington would say—for he spoke Spanish; "what lofty windows! How can you clean them?" "Oh! we have ladders." "Indeed! but where can you deposit such long ladders?" The information was willingly given, and the next morning these long ladders formed part of the British baggage, to be useful at the next siege.

Water.—An experienced gardener says that a sure sign to find out if plants in pots require wetting is to rap on the side of the pots near the middle, with the finger knuckle; if it gives forth a hollow ring, the plant needs water.

UNDER THE GALLOWS!

Frightful Condemnation of a Mother by Her Son—What Does it Mean?

Not long ago a weeping mother called to bid good bye to her only son who was soon to be executed.

"Woman," he exclaimed in a momentary frenzy, "woman, I would never have been here had you done your duty by me when I was young!"

This was a terrible parting! It horrified the spectators, it nearly crazed the conscience stricken mother.

One can scarcely overestimate the mother's influence in the moulding of the character of her offspring. But how often, oh, how often, do mothers seem to ignore this responsibility!

During a recent trip on the rail the writer made the acquaintance of Dr. A. J. Bennett, of Sackett's Harbor, N. Y., a person who had made a study of human development. Referring to the murderous tendency of the times, we asked that eminent man if the outlook was not discouraging?

"It looks so," he said, "but I fancy we have a cause and the remedy for such evils. In my professional career I have found by hard study that we have emerged from savagery by development of the nervous system and the intellectual life, and we return to savagery as we ignore the fact that without the solid, trustworthy nervous system, we cannot hope to save the race. Boys stuff dime novels and ten pistol is to them the only respectable glorious manhood and secure fame. Women read trashy literature and straightway try to murder their husbands and friends by poison. Business men yield to the tempter, and forge and steal and default. Ministers, charmed by beauty, forgets the behests of conscience. On every side we see the weakness of personal integrity."

"Do you regard it as a disease?"

"More especially as the result of disease which, however, may be prevented."

"Please define how."

"I cannot now enter into details. Our people can see their bodies, their blood, their bones. They never see their nerves and consequently many do not suppose they have any. The farmer's wife rejoices in a big, physical frame, and yet she dies prematurely. The nerve cannot stand the strain of continual work. The minister falls dead in his pulpit, but he never did a day's physical work in his life. The lawyer faints in the presence of the court and is soon a wreck or a corpse, and yet the work is nerve work. The man of affairs is overcome with apoplexy; the politician and publicist, with Bright's disease. The mind of untutored man is fired by the exploits of crime and he longs for such fame. These persons overwork or over-excite the nervous system and this fact kills or demoralizes them."

"If all this be so how would you rectify it then?"

"Let me tell you. A few years ago I had a lady patient who was an utter wreck. She was the mother of several children. She lost her mind and imagined she was cursed of God. She was a farmer's wife, and worked early and late. I never saw a finer specimen of physical womanhood than she, but she was a nervous wreck! She became bedridden, had the very worst of female disorders and was in the last stages of albuminuria of Bright's disease. This latter disease works particular havoc with the nervous system and produces insanity and despair. She was insane and desperate and I fear tainted the blood of her offspring with these terrible tendencies. I treated her for several years. One by one the standard remedies of the schools failed, but I finally cured her with Warner's safe cure, and she is to-day strong and well. Yet thousands of women like her, every year bring ill formed and ofttimes ill-behaved children into the world. Is it any wonder that nervous diseases prevail and that the whole moral sense is demoralized? If that remedy were generally used, we would have stronger mothers, stronger children, stronger men and women, and with perfect physical and mental health, crime would decrease and society be more secure."

Such candid opinions are surely worth considering.

Collecting Evidence.—According to a dark report from Scotland a dissenting minister up there, who was once respected with the best of them, has fallen a victim to the passion for tobacco. Even on week days a minister of the Free Kirk might find something to do better than smoke; but, so long as he confines himself to poisoning the atmosphere of his back-garden only with his tobacco, a free and liberal congregation would leave him alone. This rash clergyman, however, is said to have gone further than that. His infatuation for the baneful weed has tempted him to a furtive pipe on Sundays; and with success he has become overbold. The wild rumor has gone like wildfire through his congregation that on Sunday nights when they are supposed to be safe in bed, the misguided man may be seen sitting at an open window in the manse puffing exultantly at a small clay pipe. He can only be seen from the top of the back garden wall; and it is said that on Sunday nights a row of black heads may now be observed peering over it. It is the kirk-session collecting evidence.

Roast monkey is now the gastronomic "go" in Paris. Its flavor is said to be a compromise between pheasant and hare.

Our Young Folks.

DOLLY DOBSTICK.

BY PIPKIN.

DOLLY DOBSTICK was a grumpy, stumpy, little old woman.

She wore a coal-scuttle bonnet and a blue cloak; her face was all wrinkles, and her cheeks were like apples.

She had a habit of asking questions, and poking one with a stick if she was not answered directly.

The village folks always dodged out of her way, and crossed the road from her.

Only little Maysie never dodged away from her; because Maysie had a very pretty habit of being nice to old people, whether they are grumpy or not.

So that very day, as sunburnt little Maysie was going down the corn-field path, with her pinafore full of red poppies, as soon as she saw the old woman stuck on the top of a stile unable to get down, she said kindly—

"Will you lean on my shoulder?" and helped her to the ground.

"Thank you, my dear. Take that!" said Dolly, and tumbled her over with a poke of the stick; and all the poppies fell out of her pinafore.

There was a tree shading the stile.

The sunshine through its branches made round bright spots of trembling light on the ground where Maysie lay.

Before she could rise, the old woman had grabbed up all her flowers, and stuffed them into the pockets of her apron.

"Oh! where are my poppies?" said Maysie, leaning on one hand as she sat on the ground.

Old Dolly Dobstick nodded her nose and chin, and patted her pockets.

"It's all right, my dear. Don't you trouble. I've got 'em."

"Then please keep them—and good morning!" said Maysie timidly, trying to get up.

"All right, my dear; and what will you have instead? What?—what?—what?"

"I don't want anything, thank you," said Maysie, in a great hurry, for the stick looked as if it were going to poke her.

"Oh! nonsense, my dear. You must have something for giving me all your poppies. Take that!"

And Dolly Dobstick gave Maysie another little poke, that just rolled her tidily over when she was getting up.

She was not in the least hurt.

She got up laughing, and shook the earth off her pinafore.

And only then she found sticking to the palm of each hand a round bit of sunshine about the size of a penny.

The bits of sunshine were loosened off her hands with a touch; they were like pieces of transparent gold, or like some kind of very thin yellow jewels.

They must have stuck to her hands when the old woman tipped her over twice and said "take that!"

Dolly Dobstick was nowhere to be seen.

Maysie would have liked to say "thank you!" but there was no one to say it to, so she ran straight home to Thatch-roof Farm, and showed her bits of sunshine.

The farmer was grumbling at the weather, though it was sunshine and blue sky.

His wife was crying because the fox had stolen the speckled hen.

She said it would be better to make all the other hens into roast fowl, and to make the pigs into sausages, and to sell the house for a song, and go and live in the barn and keep nothing but the donkey—because it was a miserable world.

The maids were quarrelling in the kitchen because the milk was spilt, and the men were quarrelling in the farm-yard because they had been sitting in the shade of the haystack all the morning trying to make each other stand up and feed the animals.

The farmer hung up one bit of sunshine in the hall between the case of stuffed birds and the clock.

And the farmer's wife hung the other bit of sunshine on a red ribbon round Maysie's neck.

Everything brightened up.

The farmer said it was glorious weather; his wife said there were two dozen speckled hens yet in the yard; the maids said, "There's no help for spilt milk but to call the cat—puss! puss! puss!"

The men found out that they were cross because they were idle; the animals were fed, the cows trooped out to the meadows, and everyone and everything were as happy as could be.

A whole year went happily by; the corn was ripening yellow again.

Maysie went down the path gathering red poppies, just as she had done a twelvemonth before.

And there again was old Dolly Dobstick stuck on the stile, kicking with her feet and banging with her stick, unable to get up or down.

The sunburnt little girl helped her down, and said—

"Thank you for the two little bits of sunshine."

"Thank you, my dear, for helping me off the stile. You are a good little girl. Take that!"

Maysie had begun skip away; but there was no poke of the stick this time; instead, the old, brown, wrinkled hand was held out to her.

"Don't run away, little girl, here's a spider for you. It is my pet spider, so take care of it. And it is very kind, indeed, of me to give it to you. Say thank you, now."

"Thank you," said Maysie meekly.

"Aren't you fond of 'em. See what nice long legs he has got."

The old woman put the spider into her hand, and patted him for good-bye with her finger.

"If ever you let my spider go, he will find his way back to me. Now run home, and tell your father that sunshine is better than gold. Good-bye, my dear." And she gave Maysie a poke that started her at full speed toward home.

At Thatch roof Farm there was a pedlar selling all sorts of fine things at the door.

He had just given fifty dollars for the bit of sunshine out of the hall.

"Oh, father!" said Maysie. "Dame Dobstick sent you a message—that sunshine is better than gold!"

"Tut, tut! nonsense!" said the farmer, and put the fifty dollars in a fat leather purse.

Then the pedlar persuaded Maysie that just because she was such a nice little girl, he would give her a necklace of red jewels as a great bargain, in exchange for that bit of ribbon and that bright thing she wore round her neck.

So Maysie sold her pretty bit of sunshine too.

Then everything was sad, and nothing was done at Thatch-roof Farm.

Maysie found that her grand necklace was only red glass.

She threw it down the well, and began to cry.

And her father found that his fifty dollars were all lies, so he flung the bag into the fish-pond, and sat on the edge and wept.

And his wife said it was a miserable world, and it would have been better for them to have gone long ago to live in the barn and kept nothing but the donkey.

But all the maids sat in the kitchen in tears, with their aprons thrown over their heads; and all the farm men sat in a row with their backs to the haystack, sobbing very loudly.

The donkey hee-hawed bitterly.

The cow bellowed sadly; and the bull went mad, and ran after a boy who had been making fun of him.

The grunting of the pigs was doleful; and in fact, between mooing, groaning, cackling and cooing, there never was heard such a hullabaloo.

At last, Maysie's father said they all ought to go to Dolly Dobstick, and tell her about the loss of the sunshine.

But nobody knew where Dolly Dobstick lived.

Then Maysie took the spider out of the bottom of her pocket.

The old woman had told her he was sure to find his way home.

They all set off in a long line to follow the pet spider.

The worst of it was that the spider did not go straight along.

Whenever he stopped, the whole procession stopped.

They had often to sit down in a row and wait for him.

He pretended he was going to weave webs.

He lay still for an hour on the gravel, with all his eight legs spread flat; he went dodging round pebbles and trying to catch flies.

One by one the weary followers gave up.

Day changed to dusk, and dusk changed to night.

And little Maysie, all alone, was following the spider; and it shone in the dark like a speck of light.

The spider led her to a ruined castle, beautiful in the moonlight.

The spider-spark disappeared into the ivy; and then little Maysie looked in through the ruined arch of the gateway.

The fairies were dancing in the ruined castle.

One could hardly tell whether they were figures in white, or shapes made in moonlight.

But there was no mistake about it—they were fairies, and they were dancing in a ring.

Sparkling insects were glittering all over the ivy, and all the owls and all the cats of the neighborhood seemed to have assembled for the occasion; they were sitting in rows on the ruined walls, and their eyes were shining like pairs of little round yellow and green lamps.

Only for one happy moment could Maysie look upon the fair revel; it vanished when she came.

Flap, flap, flutter went all the owls overhead; and the cats ran home in every direction, a few of them were heard in the distance going caterwauling on their way down the fields.

One fairy remained—only one—a beautiful white fairy, as pretty as a young princess of fairyland.

She had little wings shaped like the wings of a butterfly, and a wand, and her flowing white dress was frosted all over with silver.

On her hand she held a spider shining like a spark of light.

"Beautiful fairy, please do tell me the way to Dolly Dobstick's house," little Maysie implored.

"Why do you want Dolly Dobstick?" the fairy asked?—"why?—why?"

And she began poking Maysie with her silver wand to hurry up her answer.

"Because she gave me sunshine, and we sold it for bad money, and glass jewels," said poor Maysie, crying as if her heart would break.

"And if you got your little bits of sunshine again, would you part with them for anything in the world."

"Oh! no, no!" answered Maysie. "Father says a little sunshine is the best treasure in the world."

"You are a good little girl after all. Take that!" said the beautiful fairy, giving her a kiss.

And at that moment when the fairy embraced her, Maysie found her father's piece of sunshine in her hand; but her own little bit of sunshine was squeezed through her pinafore and into her heart, so that she could never loose it again.

After this fairy embrace Maysie was let go from the arms of an old woman with an apple-cheeked wrinkled face, a coal-scuttle bonnet, and a blue cloak. It was no other than Dolly Dobstick.

She took Maysie home by a short path in one minute.

Before Maysie could open the gate Dolly Dobstick tried to climb over it, and of course stuck on the top. So Maysie climbed over, and said—

"Let me help you down; and won't you come in?"

"No, thank you, my dear. Good night!"

The old woman took a skip off the top of the gate.

And then—you know how an india-rubber ball hops from the ground—Maysie saw her go over the hedge and up the opposite field, bounding away like a ball in the moonlight.

So Dolly Dobstick was a fairy in disguise after all.

Perhaps she was going about the world sticking on stiles to find who would be kindest to a stumpy, grumpy, little old woman.

And now had she got the sunshine from the pedlar? Well, when the fairies found the pedlar with bits of sunshine, they knew he had got it dishonestly, so they took it away while he was asleep.

And so Thatch-roof Farm was happy again.

The village folks put stiles up all over the country; they hoped to find Dolly Dobstick stuck up some way or other; they would all run to help her down now. But she was never seen again.

Somebody was once heard in the farmyard, singing:

> "Sing a song of sunshine,
> More than wealth untold;
> Cheery hearts are brave hearts,
> Full of Fairy Gold."

It might have been a fairy, or it might have been Maysie; for she was as merry as any fairy now.

And so shall you be if you begin in good time to carry a little bit of sunshine about with you, no matter what happens.

THE CHINESE GANDER.

BY K. S. MACQUOID.

IN a certain county there is a pleasant old house called Sunstone.

Behind it is a large garden, with green lawns, smooth as velvet, gay with flower-beds, and pleasantly shaded by tall trees. On the right, these big green lawns are divided from the park by a slender wire-fence, and here and there among the trees of the park are pretty brown cows and black and white long-tailed sheep.

The lawns slope downwards to the edge of the lake, and here two white swans glide proudly over the shining water, dragging their black feet carelessly behind them.

This pretty lake has tall trees round it, and rustic wooden bridges lead from its banks to two islands.

There are trees on the islands, and clumps of rhododendron with white and lilac flowers, and dark shining holly-bushes fence in each little inlet from prying eyes. On the largest and wildest of the islets bright-eyed, feathery-tailed squirrels chatter and chuckle as they run up and down the trees, and tell each other they are masters here, and safe out of the way of those two huge birds on the water.

The trees proudly look down at themselves, more bright and beautiful in the water; here and there the blue sky finds a place to mirror itself in, and all round the edges of the lake tall reeds and irises show show in exquisite color, bright blue demoiselle flies flit over the golden centres and white cups of the water-lilies, and tempt many a greedy little fish to leap up, and many a passing bird to dip down, in the hope of capture; while the rats swim among the bulrushes.

In the middle of the lake, in a thicket of tall green reeds, is a small wooden house, just like a big dog-kennel, with several small holes in front of it.

This is the duck-house, but it is empty; the two pretty Mandarin ducks who used to live there are dead, and so is their country-woman, the Chinese goose.

All at once the biggest of the two swans darts out of his hiding-place and makes a dart at something on that tree-shaded bank; there is a scuttling among the lower bushes in that damp corner, the bright-eyed squirrels chuckle as they scud up to the highest boughs, and then there comes across the green shining waters a melancholy cry.

The big swan hears it, and turns round to make another vicious rush into the dark corner.

"Cyg, Cyg, what an ugly temper you are in!" says his wife.

She is smaller in body than her husband is, but her heart is large, and has room in it for more than herself.

"Do have a little mercy on that poor widowed gander, he's miserable enough, as it is," she goes on; "you'd make fuss enough, I know, if you lost me."

"Stuff and nonsense," says the big swan.

His anger had ruffled his feathers, he looks stout and pompous as an alderman as he sails along.

"This water belongs to me, absolutely to me; that gander is an interloper."

Again the sad cry sounds across the lake; the squirrels sit still to listen, and a spray of golden-tasselled, pink-leaved wild roses waved to and fro, while the blossoms seem to whisper softly to one another:

"Poor fellow! poor old lonely Chinese gander, his sorrow is no make believe!"

* * * * * *

"Well, I never!" said the gardener's wife.

She was a buxom, motherly-looking woman, and she had just come down to the lake from her cottage in the kitchen garden; her white apron, gathered up in front, bulged out till it looked like a pillow.

She stooped down at the water's edge, and took out first one and then another ball of yellow fluff, and set each gently on the bank.

Long before she came to the last of the twelve, these yellow balls unrolled themselves, showing their gray and white markings, and with a sharp quack, quack, from their flat round beaks, they waddled on broad yellow feet into the water and swam quite merrily, although they had never been taught how.

The biggest and strongest brother put himself at the head of the ducklings, and they followed him in single file, till they passed under the arch of the rustic bridge, and were lost to sight.

"Well, I never," the gardener's wife repeated, "I thought they'd miss their poor mother, maybe, but to look at them one would fancy they was born on the water;" here she started. "What's that, I wonder?"

A great splash, and then a swishing sound, and then a most pitiful quacking—it seemed that each of those twelve yellow throats cried—

"Help! help! help!"

"It's that spiteful swan, and he'll drown 'em," cried the gardener's wife; and she ran off to the boat-house beside the bridge to get one of the long oars.

When the orphan ducklings had crossed the arch they saw the huge swan bearing down upon them like a ship into a fleet of floating boats.

They huddled all together, and quacked as loudly as they could.

The enemy came nearer and nearer, splashing with his rapid strokes the elder brother duckling who quacked as piteously as the rest, and swam away with them to the dark corner shaded by an elder-bush in full blossom. The bank was steep and slippery, and as they scrambled up two of the ducklings fell back into the water with their feet in the air.

Their brother tried to set them afloat, but the swan pounced on one of them, shook it, and then flung its poor little dead body into the water.

Cyg arched his neck and ruffled his feathers; he decided to finish off these little interlopers, and he took a vigorous stroke towards the bank.

A sharp cry made him raise his head.

On the bank above him, defying his approach, stood the Chinese gander, the same miserable bird who had that morning fled from him.

Now, with cocked tail, with brown feathers puffed out aggressively, the gander's fiery tipped knob looked double its usual size.

Cyg glanced behind him; his wife was out of sight.

He didn't understand Chinese; he had been born in the neighborhood, so the gander's harsh cry was an unknown tongue to him: but Cyg saw that he looked very strong and very angry, and he felt that unless he meant to fight he had better swim away.

The gander screamed and charged down the bank into the water.

Cyg saw that he meant mischief, so he wheeled round, splashing and spluttering, and never stopped till he found himself safe out of sight behind the island.

The ducklings cried sadly for their sister as she floated away among the water-lilies, but their champion called them to order, and at his harsh cry, which they seemed to understand as well as if they had been reared in China, they slipped one after another into the water, and followed in single file at the tail of the Chinese gander.

They circled the largest island till they came in sight of the old bridge. There, resting in the shadow of the arch, were the two swans.

The ducklings huddled together, and set up a pathetic quack, quack, but the gander gave them a harsh croak of encouragement; then shouting out his war-cry, he sailed with knob erect past both the swans, and the ducklings followed in a little golden line.

Mrs. Cyg looked at her husband in surprise.

"Yes,"—he plumed his feathers while he spoke—"it's all right, I gave him leave to do it. I couldn't of course, allow a fellow-countryman to trespass so, but we must make allowance for foreigners. You must remember, my dear, he's only a Chinese gander."

For all purgative purposes, for Constipation, Indigestion, Headache, and Liver Complaint, take Ayer's Pills. By universal accord, they are the best of all purgatives for family use.

CHANGE.

BY M. B. EDWARDS.

In hope I climbed the grassy stair,
The hill in sunshine glancing;
A thousand grasses blossomed fair,
The breezes set them dancing;
Each seemed a happy soul to be,
Rejoicing with the summer;
I smiled to think they danced for me,
And every glad new comer.

But, ah! a rapture greater still,
Behold, my heart awaited;
It was the self-same grassy hill,
But wondrously translated!
It seemed that gems had dropped in showers,
The hill with glory lining;
'Twas but a crowd of sorrel flowers,
Through which the sun was shining.

Each flower with its ruby wings
Moved to a rhythmic measure;
Spell-bound, I watched the lovely things,
As one who finds a treasure.
I danced, I sang, I could not choose
But of their brightness borrow;
I felt as if I ne'er could lose
That joy in any sorrow.

Downcast I took the self-same way,
The summer hardly older,
But oh, how different seemed the day
To me, a sad beholder!
No light lies on the hill top now,
No music stirs the grasses;
The very insects seem to know
That some great sorrow passes.

I reached at last the flowery place
Where late I sat in rapture;
In vain I gazed with wistful face,
No glow could I recapture.
The sorrel flowers were blooming there,
Not one, perhaps, had vanished;
But oh! the cloud of black despair
Their grace and joy were banished.

SOME OLD-TIME BANQUETS.

An old time chronicler tells us that on the occasion of a tournament honored by the presence of most of the nobility of England, the cooks who prepared the banquets entered into a friendly contest as to which of them should have the merit of designing the most acceptable dish.

The cook to whom this honor fell sent in a sucking-pig harnessed to a chariot of plum-pudding with strings of sausages. To enjoy such a dish as this, our forefathers must, to say the least of it, been very gross feeders. They were also great feeders, and the chief aim of a host was to load the table until it literally groaned beneath the weight placed upon it.

In 1470, the Archbishop of York gave a banquet which has probably never been surpassed for the abundance of comestibles consumed.

Three hundred quarters of flour were used, three hundred and thirty tuns of ale, a hundred hogsheads of hippocras, eighty fat oxen, six wild oxen, a thousand and four sheep, three hundred pigs, three hundred sucking-pigs, three hundred calves, three thousand geese, a thousand capons, two hundred peatowl, two hundred cranes, two hundred kids, two thousand chickens, four thousand pigeons, four thousand rabbits, two hundred and four herons, four thousand ducks, two hundred pheasants, five hundred partridges, four thousand snipes, four hundred waterhens, one hundred quails, one thousand bitterns, two hundred roes, four hundred deer, fifteen hundred and six venison pasties, fourteen hundred bowls of meat jelly, four thousand bowls of sweet spices, three hundred pikes, three hundred breams, eight dogfish, four dolphins, and four hundred and fifty fruit tarts.

Sixty red-faced cooks labored and fumed to reduce these good things to dainty dishes; while a thousand serving men waited outside the banqueting hall and five hundred and fifteen within.

The lordly archbishop who sat at the head of the table was the brother of the celebrated "King-maker," and the occasion was his elevation to the primacy of England.

The King-maker himself was no less notable for his housekeeping. At his London mansion his retainers consumed six oxen daily for breakfast; and at his numerous seats the same liberal scale of purveyance was absolutely necessary.

The Germans, always celebrated for heavy eating, furnish us with some curious culinary items.

In the middle ages the goose was the grand dish among them; but they also ate crows, storks, cranes, herons, swans, and bitterns—these last-named dishes being arranged in a circle of honor around the goose. The gelor or European vulture, the dogfish, the dolphin, and even the whale, were eaten; whilst a roast guinea-pig was considered a very great delicacy.

All their foods were highly spiced; and sauces were endless in their variety, three or four kinds being served with each dish. In these sauces, pepper, mace, cloves, cinnamon mustard, ginger, garlic, saffron, and pimento contended for the mastery; and the more decided the flavor, the better the cook.

Of course, the great art was to arrange these sauces in an ascending scale of piquancy. So great, indeed, was the passion for highly-flavored foods, that turkeys had often an allowance of musk in their daily rations.

The most fashionable wines were those of Chios, Cyprus, and other Greek vintages; but, as highly flavored foods require drink to correspond, the wine was generally spiced, and was served under the name of hippocras.

It was not thought unpolite, even so late as the sixteenth century, for a guest to ask his host what wine he intended to provide, so that he might make his calculations as to what he would take before he confined himself to the particular tipple which should place him under the table; nor was it thought unpolite in the middle of a banquet to undo the girdle in order to make room for such tempting tid-bits as pike tails, barbels' heads, skin of roast goose, and swan tongues.

The feast usually commenced at eleven in the forenoon; and the longer the host could keep the guests at table, the better was he thought of; but in the matter of drinking, he was expected to encourage potation by inviting bacchanalian songs, or, at least, by being himself the first to become helpless.

It was with this latter object that a rich man would mix his wines; while a poorer one would contrive to have his homely tankard strongly dosed with wine, or even spirits, when these had become general.

In 1585, when Prince John William of Zulich married Princess Jacoba of Baden, the show-dishes grew to such considerable proportions that they occupied a very large space in the dining-hall.

The principal show-dish represented a garden, where grew laurel trees with leaves covered with spangles, fruit trees on great rocks; hills and mountains; rivers and ponds, in which swam live fish; castles, cities, mansions, farms and huts; forests inhabited by elephants, lions, tigers, and singing birds; whilst some musicians, skilfully hidden in the cardboard, discoursed sweet music to the delight of the guests.

Grains of Gold.

Cultivate the respect of others, command your self-respect.

And, after all, it is such a little way that we can go together.

Seek to know the lesson of each experience that comes to you.

Good manners and good morals are firm friends and sworn allies.

True wisdom in general consists in energetic determination.

Hope is the wing of an angel bearing our prayer to the throne of God.

The godly never outlive their usefulness; therefore, let the aged take heart.

No one benefits more by an act of courtesy than the person who performs it.

Everything we pretend to takes from our influence; everything we are, adds to it.

Many people are busy in the world gathering together a handful of thorns to sit upon.

He that waits for an opportunity of taking his revenge, watches to do himself a mischief.

As malarial air endangers a good constitution, so bad companions endanger a good character.

Religion is the most gentlemanly thing of the world. It alone will gentilize if unmixed with cant.

Those who think money will do anything may be suspected of doing anything for money.

Wherein you reprove another be unblamable yourself, for example is more prevalent than precept.

Even if old age be querulous and exacting, as sometimes it is, youth and strength should be patient and gentle.

Laughing, if loud, ends in a deep sigh; and all pleasures have a sting in the tail, though they carry beauty on the face.

A wise and good man will turn examples of all sorts to his own advantage. The good he will make his patterns, and strive to equal or excel them. The bad he will by all means avoid.

Do not be desirous to have things done quickly; do not look at small advantages. Desire to have things done quickly prevents their being done thoroughly. Looking at small advantages prevents great affairs from being accomplished.

Femininities.

A diamond "lucky" slipper is a novelty for brides.

The rage now in Paris is "to be married at midnight."

Girls can marry at the age of 11 years in the State of Maine.

The color of the mourner's garb in Turkey is violet; in Egypt it is yellow.

A number of Boston women have formed an organization for the study of politics.

Mrs. A. T. Stewart has all the doors inside of her New York palace hung with pansy velvet.

Matrimonial history is a narrative of many words; but the story of love may be told in a few letters.

There is a Keokuk girl with such a good-sized mouth that she has to be measured for her tooth-brushes.

At the last census a woman gave her own age as twenty-eight years, and that of her eldest son as twenty-three!

The jasper stone is coming into favor again as a jewel, according to jewelers who cater to rich and fashionable people.

It's many years since the poet wrote that "beauty draws us with a single hair." It generally takes a $40 switch to do it now.

Both parties to a breach-of-promise marriage suit, now going on in Louisville, Ky., are deaf mutes, and the man is the plaintiff.

A Colorado paper says: "The Canon City girls don't take kindly to croquet. They say it isn't high-toned enough for them. Leap-frog is their best hold."

When you send a paper to a lady, cut a small item out, no matter what. This ensures the office the sale of another paper. She has got to see what it was if it takes a week to find out.

Dark red kid slippers, worn with buckles of Irish diamonds, are the prettiest things in their way. The color does not enlarge the apparent size of the foot like light tints, and the kid is very fine and soft.

A California girl shoots wild geese and sends their feathers to market, and in this way she has laid by $600 to give the man who marries her. It is thought the men all seem to be waiting for her to make it $1,000.

Tramp (to woman at the door)—"Can you give me something to eat? I'm starving." Woman—"I can give you a nice piece of fresh mince pie." Tramp—"Isn't it a little early in the season for mince pie?"

The little one, being a guest of her grandma, had been liberally feasted, when a second dish of pudding came on. Looking at the steaming dish she exclaimed, with a sigh: "Say, gran'ma, I wish I was twins?"

A writer on dress says, "Short and podgy women ought to wear bolts." What's the use of giving advice in that way? There isn't a woman in the world who would admit, even to herself, that she was "short and podgy."

Mrs. Langtry, not satisfied with the natural color of her hair, which was beautiful, and of which she took incessant care, has painted it a kind of reddish color, which, it appears, is becoming the fashion in Paris, and has much injured her appearance.

It is always very pleasant for a man to have his young wife knit him a pair of socks, but it requires considerable diplomacy on his part to ask her which part is intended for the heel and which section is meant for the toes, without hurting her feelings.

Poetry, a waxed moustache, mystery, long hair, and a sweet tenor voice will often make a woman feel as if there was only a sheet of tissue paper between heaven and herself, but it is the man with the wart on his nose and six figures in his bank balance who scoops her in and makes her happy ever afterwards.

In Marseilles, the other night, Mlle. Ninoff, a young and beautiful actress, acquitted herself so badly on the stage that the audience hissed her. She wept and pleaded for indulgence, protesting that she was very ill. She was hooted off the stage. She was found dead in her bed next morning, having died during the night from the effects of the illness of which she had complained.

It is said that the immediate delivery system is most in favor with the authors of love letters. And rightly enough it should be popular with that class, for there is no sort of correspondence that demands such immediate delivery as love letters. The delay of a business letter will do no great harm, but it is the general experience of mankind that the love letter deferred maketh the lovelorn heart particularly sick.

Good husbands cannot be spoiled by petting. Bad ones will not be made worse by the process. They may be made better. One and all, they like it. Not only fondling and love words, but to have their home-comings at evenings accounted events; they enjoy pretty surprises and favorite dishes, the flower laid by the plate, the becoming gown or ribbon put on to please their eyes. It is the "little by little" that makes the weal or woe of life.

Says Johnny, who is spending the afternoon at the Smiths: "My mother says she'd like to look like you, Mrs. Smith." Mrs. Smith (who is extremely plain, but not entirely aware of it): "Like me, my dear? I take that as a compliment, indeed, from as pretty a lady as your mamma. You're quite sure it was I, Johnnie, that she meant?" "Johnny (accepting another mince pie): "Oh, yes'm. She said if she could have your health and strength, she believed she'd as lief look as you do."

"Why is it that the attendants in telephone offices are all women?" Mrs. Brown made this inquiry of her husband. "Well," answered Mrs. Brown, "the managers of the telephone offices were aware that no class of attendants work so faithfully as those who are in love with their labor; and they knew that women would be fond of the work in telephone offices." "What is the work in a telephone office?" Mrs. Brown further inquired. "Talking," answered Mr. Brown. And the conversation came to an end.

Masculinities.

Opportunity is the cream of time.

A Chinese physician has opened an office in Boston.

How many men and women are there without a weak spot somewhere?

Cheek in man is not to be admired; but what is sheer than a woman's cheek?

Honesty sometimes keeps a man from becoming rich, and civility from being witty.

Arnold speaks of "earning genuine manhood by steadily serving out the period of boyhood."

"To what base uses we may come at last!" Victor Hugo's coffin is now one of the shows of Paris.

Business is steadily getting better, but there are six weary months coming for the husbands whose wives naturally have cold feet.

A California farmer keeps five thousand hens, which he houses in coops built on sleds, so that he can move them about his fields of wheat stubble.

The statesman who so far forgets himself as to run after a street-car, suffers a fall in public estimation which twenty-five years of penance will not repair.

A reputable medical journal is responsible for the statement that men in Paraguay have tails. Even if it is true, it isn't much fun, for there are no tin cans in Paraguay.

"I threw my love to him, and it hath gone astray," sings Lillie Drake, in an exchange. Let Lillie be comforted by the reflection that a woman never can fling anything straight.

Jones, who had just come from Florence, being asked whether he was not in rapsures with the Venus de Medici, replied: "Well to tell the truth, I don't care about those stone gals."

The King of Denmark would gladly give $10,000 to get rid of a wart that disfigures his chin, and the doctors would gladly acquire the cash, but they are afraid of evil results if they attempt an operation.

It is estimated that there are over two millions of single men in France who are of age to marry, have means enough to marry on, have no special reasons for not marrying, yet show no disposition to commit matrimony.

"They certainly do quarrel, Mrs. Crapsey." "Pshaw! I don't believe a word of it. Why, they fairly dote on each other." "But I heard her call him an old fool, myself." "Why, bless you, that's nothing!" "Is it?" "Lor', no! That's only a way she has of being loving and cheerful."

Two old people—both were over sixty—were making a bridal tour into Cincinnati, and acted so silly that a conductor threatened to put them off the train. A Cincinnati judge gave them a verdict of $300 as damages. He argued that a person who didn't act silly when in love is not really in love.

An Ohio man was given morphine by mistake instead of quinine, and the whole populace of the town turned out and took turns running him up and down the streets to keep him awake. At about four o'clock in the afternoon the sufferer began to fight the crowd, and the doctors pronounced him convalescent.

Little Johnnie Fizzletop has the habit of waking up every night about midnight and demanding something to eat. At last his mother said to him: "Look here, Johnnie, I never want to eat anything in the night." "Well, I don't think I'd care much to eat anything either in the night if I kept all my teeth in a mug of water."

"I wonder what you can see in that Smith girl that you're so much taken with her," said one country youth to another: "she ain't got no looks to her." "I know," the rustic lover slowly observed, "that she ain't what you might call good-looking, but," and he drew a long breath, "by gosh, you should feel her hug!"

According to M. Lagneau, the well-known statistician, there is a lower rate of mortality among bachelors under twenty-two years of age than among married men. Above that age the contrary is observed, and married men live longer than bachelors. Among bachelors 38 per 1,000 are criminals; among married men 18 per 1,000.

While conversing with Miss Esmeralda Longcoffin, an old maid, she asked a young man, in a bantering mood: "How old do you really think I am?" "About thirty," he replied. "You are joking," said Miss Longcoffin, indignantly. "Well," said the wretch, looking at her more critically, "you can't be much older than thirty-five or forty."

A wealthy marquis, who died in Paris some time ago, was so parsimonious that, seeing his servant one day with a nice-looking hat, he reprimanded him for his extravagance. "But it is the old hat you gave me; I had it ironed for a franc." "Indeed?" said the marquis; "I did not know it could be restored. Here is the franc you paid—I will take the hat,"—and he forthwith transferred the renovated chapeau to his own head.

Farmer to physician—"If you git out my way, doctor, any time, I wish you'd stop and see my wife. She says she ain't feelin' well." Physician—"What are some of her symptoms?" Farmer—"I dunno; this mornin', after she had milked the cows, an' fed the stock, an' got breakfast for the hands, an' washed the dishes, an' built a fire under the soap-kettle in the lane, an' done a few chores 'bout the house, she complained o' feelin' kinder tired. I shouldn't be at all surprised if her blood was jest a leetle out of order. I guess she needs a dose of medicine."

"My dear," said a wife to her husband, "I know that I am dreadfully cross with you at times, that I am not patient as I should be; and I think the same can be said of you." "Yes, certainly," he frankly admitted, "I am almost as bad as you are." "What's that?" "I—I say that I am just as much to blame as you are." "I think," went on the lady, "that we ought to cultivate a mutual toleration of each other's faults;" and she bent over and fondly kissed him. "You are not looking well to-night, dear," he said, stroking her hair. "No," she replied; "my feet pain me dreadfully." "That's because you wear shoes two sizes too small for you." Then the trouble began once more.

Just One Peep.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

BISHOP WAGHERN was one of the most wealthy and influential personages in Sweden.

At the time our story commences his only son was about to lead the fair and beautiful Greta Wulstram to the altar.

The invited guests were numerous, all belonging to the aristocracy and gentry, the only exception to this rule being the Bishop's faithful gardener, Peter, and his charming little wife Kate.

Everything went "merry as a marriage bell."

Peter and his wife were the first on hand, and the last to leave.

No two persons of the whole assemblage enjoyed themselves so much as did the gardener and his wife.

The day succeeding the festival we find Peter and his wife toiling at their usual work in the Bishop's garden. The day was very warm.

At last the heat became too oppressive, and they were glad to seek the shade of an evergreen tree.

The gentle murmuring of a small rivulet attracted their attention, and for a time both remained silently meditating.

At last Peter drew a deep sigh, as he cast a half-smiling, half-serious look upon his spouse, saying—

"After all, dear wife, I think it is an irreparable misfortune that our Mother Eve yielded to her temptation and ate of that forbidden fruit. Had not that been done, we should most likely for every day have as good fare as yesterday, with no toiling work to make body and mind desponding, as we now find it to be the case."

Kate's countenance underwent several changes of coloring during this short address.

She seemed, on the whole to share her husband's feelings; but, true to a woman's nature, she wished to vindicate her sex. She said—

"It is likely Eve was not alone—" to blame, she meant to say, but stopped short as she espied the Bishop behind some bushes listening to the conversation. The latter, on being detected, stepped forward and entered into a discussion with them on the subject.

The Bishop pointed out the folly of thus building castles in the air, and bewailing a thing that never could be undone; adding, in a serious tone—

"We human beings are very apt to detect and judge of other people's faults, without taking into consideration that ourselves would not act any better if placed in the same situations."

The gardener and his wife, however, held a different opinion on the subject. They hinted with what scrupulous care they performed every duty of the world, and then added—

"We are doubly sure that the Tree of Life would not have been touched to this day had we been in our first parents' place."

That same evening he sent for them, and said that they would henceforth be relieved from their menial labor; his home would still be their home, and the garden would now be at their disposal for pleasure and enjoyment.

All this, with board and attendance, they would have free and gratuitously for the rest of their days.

"But," added the Bishop, in a solemn tone, "I have one important condition to exact from you, to make this my obligation binding; and it is that you shall neither touch, handle, nor test one covered dish, which shall always stand on the middle of the table, and is called the Dish of Life."

The gardener and his wife threw themselves at the Bishop's feet, as a token of gratitude for his liberality and generous offer.

"That one condition," said they, "is the most easy thing in the world to comply with."

And their hearts were filled with joy to overflowing while musing over the happy future that lay open before them, at the same time making a thousand and one silent pledges in their hearts that disobedience should never, never be the cause of their ruin.

No honeymoon's bliss can be compared with the happiness and joy our hero and heroine derived in their paradise life.

Days passed into weeks, weeks into months, and months into years; but still there was no indication of sunset in our "everlasting festal day," as Peter expressed himself.

Two years, with their changes and vicissitudes, passed away, but still the same.

Their morning and evening promenade in the garden was never omitted; the table was never found wanting in delicate food, and the mysterious Dish of Life was still occupying its customary place in the centre.

The gardener and his wife also appeared as happy as ever; though at times a close observer would have detected that especially Kate's happiness was on the wane. Her serious countenance indicated something heavy on her mind.

At the meal her eyes wandered from one dish to another, as if something was wanting.

The Dish of Life also had its full share of her very scrutinizing gaze, as if she would say—

"I wonder, after all, what great mysteries are hid under your cover."

Once she also expressed herself to that effect, when her husband, divining her thoughts, reprimanded her for allowing her temptations to create the least idea in her mind of disobedience to their generous lord and master.

A few days after this incident Kate came down to the breakfast table more dejected and low-spirited than ever.

Everything was against her that morning. The breakfast hour was late; the weather was low and misty; and, besides, an ugly dream of the previous night was greatly disturbing her mind.

For a moment husband and wife remained as silent as statues.

At last Kate said—

"I am thinking that the Bishop's generosity is not so very praiseworthy after all; at least, not so long as he keeps such an object of temptation before our eyes. What's the use of that famous Dish of Life standing here all the time? We ought, at least, to know its contents, and how long it shall be kept before our eyes."

Her husband's spirit was fully aroused by such daring words. He commenced to remonstrate with her with great force of arguments, and declared such utterances rebellious.

He also reminded her of their many solemn pledges, and the consequences so apt to follow the path of every wrong or evil deed.

The wife, however, could neither see any rebellion nor harm in finding out what a thing contained, when they had no intention either to touch or take anything away. They would, besides, keep the whole a profound secret, and it would, on the whole, do more good than harm, as the revealing of this mystery was the only thing in the world by which her former peace of mind could be restored.

The husband still stood firm, and spoke about disobedience, and its usually accompanying consequences; but she urged her cause with increasing zeal, and in a more and more supplicating manner.

"Dear husband, let me get just one peep," added she as a closing remark, after a long discourse on the subject; and at the same time her husband was the recipient of one of those bewitching smiles which ladies know so well how to bestow when asking a favor.

After still making a few faint remonstrances, Peter at last gave in; and, oh, how Kate's heart beat with delight and joy! As for Peter, his cup of joy was already mixed with bitter drops of fear and reproach for yielding in a righteous cause, and sacrificing virtue and duty on the altar of pleasure.

Preparations were now made for that one peep into the mysterious dish. Peter was to raise the cover very gently, while Kate took her station close by ready to get her curiosity satisfied.

From fear or excitement, Peter's hand shook as in a fit of ague; and—oh, his cruel fate!—the cover slipped from his hand on the table, and there stood the mysterious dish, uncovered, and in full view.

And, oh, what a scene for their curiosity to contemplate! There was nothing to eat; but it was—it was simply a small living rat!

From motives of either not liking the penetrating gaze it received, or wishing to get relieved from its confinement, the living dish jumped out, first on the table, and then on the floor, and hid itself in a corner, while Peter and Kate stood aghast, looking on in astonishment and wonder.

A guilty conscience, however, soon awakened them from their stupor.

They thought of their evil deed, and the consequences likely to follow as the price of their curiosity and selfishness and bitter was their cup of repentance.

How could they even bear the thought of meeting the Bishop's countenance again? How could they brave the scandal that was sure to follow?

At that moment the Bishop hastened to the spot, where the unfortunate pair, with a keen feeling of fear and shame, hid their faces with their hands, and remained silent as the grave.

The Bishop, however, comprehending all, addressed them in a stern voice, saying—

"Years ago you complained bitterly that your lot was cast to feed yourselves in the sweat of your brows, and that our first parents were the cause of it.

"I took compassion on you, and as far as possible placed you in the same situation as our first parents in Paradise.

"You had, with a certainty, all their privileges, and likewise the same degree of temptation; and what is the result? It is the same.

"It is only another proof adduced that human nature is the same in all ages. Therefore, go ye home. Never utter this complain of other people's faults before you are sure not to be guilty of the same if placed in the same situation."

So saying the Bishop expelled them from the festal chamber.

THE SAME FISH.—O'Connell, the Irish statesman, often reverted to the period when he was attending his terms at Gray's Inn, London. He said he used constantly then to amuse himself boating on the Thames, so constantly, that the waterman's fare made inconvenient inroads on his purse. He pointed out to me a court on the north side of Coventry street, in which he had lodged in 1794. "I then lived in that *cul-de-sac*," said he, "and had excellent accommodation there." Passing one day through Coventry street, he stopped opposite a fishmonger's shop, saying, "That shop is in precisely the same state in which I remember it when I was at Gray's Inn, nearly fifty years ago—the same sized window, the same frontage and I believe, the same fish!" S.

THERE are produced annually in this country about 13,000,000 lambs.

OF SUNSHINE.

WHAT a horrible glare! The sun will take all the color out of the carpet;" and such like remarks, issue daily from the lips of thrifty housewives in summer. The value of sunlight is but little understood, and yet its advantages are apparent everywhere. Note the pale cheeks of the town bred child which passes more than half its existence in the house, and which, when out of doors, the sun usually reaches through a veil-like cloud of smoke. Note, again, a geranium grown in a dimly-lighted cellar. Its leaves will be pale, if not almost white, for lack of sunlight, and it will look only what it is, a weakly, sickly plant. Transplant child and geranium into the country, roses bloom at the end of a few weeks on the cheeks of one, flowers and green leaves appear on the other. But sunlight does more than give rosy cheeks and health; it absolutely prevents disease in many cases; for, if given time enough, it kills the germs of the air which produce putrefaction. It seems to be a wonderful provision of nature that the putrefaction which is often caused by the heat of the sun can be prevented, or even stopped after it has commenced, by exposure of the putrefying substance to direct sunlight. This fact is evidenced in sun-dried meat or fish. If the meat or fish, instead of being hung in the sun, were placed, subject to a similar heat, in the shade, it would quickly become tainted. It is clear, therefore, that the light has as important an influence in the operation as the heat. The latter dries up the juices; the former prevents putrefaction; for in sunlight, the germs which bring about that state cannot continue to live.

Many experiments have been attempted to determine the effect of sunlight on germs; but the results have been anything but satisfactory, being rather mystifying than otherwise. A French savant, has however, recently conducted certain experiments on the ordinary germs of the air that produce putrefaction, with some definite and therefore gratifying results. The experiments, though no doubt difficult to carry out, were very simple in their nature, and are quite within the comprehension of the ordinary reader.

He commenced by cultivating the microbes which are chiefly responsible for the "turning" of milk, because a microbe that can break down a substance such as milk, would, generally speaking, be very similar to disease germ that breaks down the tissues of the body. At the germ-forming period, he introduced some into each of a number of carefully sterilized flasks.

The flasks he then stopped with wool, so that the air, but no fresh germs could enter. The various flasks were then treated in different ways. Some were exposed to sunlight; others were kept in ordinary light—that is, not in the sun; others again, were kept in an ordinary light, but in a temperature equal to sun-heat.

The results proved the great value of sunlight. The milk in the flasks which were exposed to heat only, turned putrid almost immediately—that is to say, the germs preserved their vitality.

It has been ascertained that for three years the germs could be exposed to a tropical heat, provided there was no direct sunlight, without harm to them.

The results were very different with regard to the flasks exposed to the sunlight; in these it was found that, after a month, the power of putrefaction in the germs decidedly diminished, and that their vitality was lowered.

After two months' exposure, the noxious germs were destroyed in two out of five flasks. There the experiments stopped. It is probable, if not certain, that different varieties of germs require different periods of exposure to sunlight to be killed.

These scientific experiments are valuable as showing how mankind is so benefitted by sunlight. That mankind is so benefitted has been acknowledged for ages by thoughtful persons, though the extent of those benefits are not so generally known or appreciated as they ought to be.

Except in the hottest summer weather, sunlight should be admitted freely into houses; and never, even on the plea that otherwise the sun will put out the fire, should blinds be pulled wholly or partially down in winter. It should at the same time be borne in mind that in hygiene, fresh air ranks equal to sunlight in importance.

"Live on the sunny side of the street, for there the doctor never comes," is a proverb which should never be forgotten, and is the outcome, not of scientific experiments, but of the experience of generations.

THE custom of requiring children at Sunday schools to write down portions of the hymn which they have been learning does not seem to produce satisfactory results, if one may judge from some specimens which have lately diverted the readers of the church papers. "Or thorns compose so rich a crown," is rendered "Hawthorns compose so rich a crown." "Hast all our fathers led" comes out "Has stole our father's lead," and another line, "The gates of brass before Him burst," as "He gave some brass before he burst."

A NEW organ swindle, it is said has been perpetrated in various parts of New Jersey. The swindlers send circulars to three or four people in a town, setting forth the advantages of their instrument over all others and offering to send the recipient of the circular one of their best organs on receipt of only $4, which is to pay the freight, and a promise that the organ will be shown to all their friends. The victim sends the $4, and receives by return mail a new ten cent mouth organ.

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results from that true contentment which indicates perfect health of body and mind. You may possess it, if you will purify and invigorate your blood with Ayer's Sarsaparilla. E. M. Howard, Newport, N. H., writes: "I suffered for years with Scrofulous humors. After using two bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, I

Found

great relief. It has entirely restored me to health." James French, Atchison, Kans., writes: "To all persons suffering from Liver Complaint, I would strongly recommend Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I was afflicted with a disease of the liver for nearly two years, when a friend advised me to take this medicine. It gave prompt relief, and has cured me." Mrs. H. M. Kidder, 41 Dwight st., Boston, Mass., writes: "For several years I have used Ayer's Sarsaparilla in my family. I never feel safe, even

At Home

without it. As a liver medicine and general purifier of the blood, it has no equal." Mrs. A. B. Allen, Winterpock, Va., writes: "My youngest child, two years of age, was taken with Bowel Complaint, which we could not cure. We tried many remedies, but he continued to grow worse, and finally became so reduced in flesh that we could only move him upon a pillow. It was suggested by one of the doctors that Scrofula might be the cause of the trouble. We procured a bottle of

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Recent Book Issues.

Messrs. Root & Tinker, of New York City have just issued a very attractive engraving 22 by 28 inches, of the leading Proprietary Medicine Manufacturers of the United States, including the most prominent two, Dr. J. C. Ayer, of Massachusetts; H. H. Warner of "Warner's Safe Cure" and others. The central figure is H. H. Warner, the back-ground of whose vignette is his trade mark of an iron safe, inscribed with the names of the famous Warner's Safe Remedies. The picture is sent out with the compliments of Mr. Warner, who, besides having won such distinguished fame as the manufacturer of "Warner's Safe Cure," is well known as the founder of the "Warner Astronomical Observatory," Rochester, N. Y., and the "Warner Astronomical Prizes," for cometary discovery, so eagerly sought for by astronomers all over the world. Mr. Warner is a self-made man, and those who know him best say that the success which he has won thus early in life (he being at present not over 45 years of age), is in all respects eminently deserved, for he is a man of very broad views and wide extended liberality.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The November number of *The Century*, beginning the thirty-first volume, is particularly strong in fiction, which includes three short stories and parts of two serials. The former are: A Cloud on the Mountain, by Mary Hallock Foote, with a full-page drawing engraved by Cole; A Story of Seven Devils, by Frank R. Stockton, and The Mystery of Wilhelm Rutter, by the late Helen Hunt Jackson. Mr. James' Bostonians is continued. The new serial is Mrs. Foote's mining story, John Bodewin's Testimony. Gen. Grant's paper, describing the campaign and battle of Chattanooga, is accompanied by a full-page portrait of the General, from a photograph taken at Mount McGregor, and two fac-simile pages of a part of one of his letters to Dr. Douglas. In Memoranda of the Civil War, Gen. Wm. F. Smith has a short article entitled, "Was Chattanooga Fought as Planned?" Finely illustrated papers are: A Photographer's Visit to Petra; Living English Sculptors; and, Typical Dogs—Setters. A discussion of the question of possible unification of American churches is begun in this number by the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Shields. A fine full-page engraving of Robert Koehler's painting: The Socialist, accompanies a striking essay on socialism by the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, entitled, Danger Ahead. The poems of the number and other matter are likewise of unusual excellence. The Century Co., New York.

KRODHAGARA.—Krodhagara is an old-looking word. It is Hindoo, and has a meaning of particular interest to young people, who in India often hear it. In America, when a child is so very cross that he cannot get over his bad humor without help, his mother says to him, "Go into the corner, my dear, until you are in a better temper." Sometimes she goes so far as to send him into the closet, or up into the garret. We have heard that in old times the cellar and the barn were occasionally designated as the places of exile. But in olden times parents were a little too severe. We should not object to the barn; but the cellar where the potatoes and the coal are kept, and where rats too frequently scamper and gnaw, it is not calculated to restore any child to good humor.

In the land of the Hindoos who are a very amiable and gentle people, there is in many houses a room called the krodhagara, or the chamber of bad humor, which serves the purpose of the corner just referred to.

"You had better go into the krodhagara, my child," observes the Hindoo mother, when little Toru is disturbed in mind, "and there remain until you feel as a Hindoo child ought to feel."

This apartment serves a still more important use in the family. It sometimes happens in those far-off heathen lands, strange as it may seem to us in a land where every one is always amiable and good tempered, that the mother herself is not in the best humor; sometimes the father is positively cross; sometimes a mother-in-law is less amiable than usual, and occasionally a grandparent does not enjoy the festive morn when the gruel is lumpy. In such cases the afflicted person goes, of his own accord, into the krodhagara, and stays there until he feels himself in benign accord with all mankind, and in particular good humor with his own family.

NOT QUITE COMPLETE.—Mr. Sala tells a story of "an English Milord" who thought that he had completed the purchase of a large white Spanish jackass, which is in his degree as precious as a barb of the purest blood, but who found that negotiations almost diplomatic in their complexity have to be gone through before such a King Donkey can be obtained. The "Milord," when he considered that he had arranged everything, was told by the proprietor of the arrogant animal that yet another formality had to be gone through before Don Moke could be shipped for home, provision not having been made for the board and lodging, with six months' salary in advance, of the jackass's *comp adre*, whose special function it was to play the guitar to him when he was sad!

GLOUCESTER, N. J., has a "Tonsorial Artist and Umbrella Maker."

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Humorous.

BROKEN UP.

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'Round the rink they go together,
Glances loving glances meeting,
Words of tenderness repeating,
Roses in her cheeks are glowing,
Joy her heart is overflowing,
And his manner is caressing,
Love his every look confessing.
O'er them smiling Cupid hovers,
Happy, joyous pair of lovers.

Ha! they oscillate, they stumble,
Crashing to the floor they tumble.
He the maiden quickly raises,
With apologetic phrases.
But the angry damsel turning
From him, his excuses spurning,
Smooths her ruffled frills and laces,
While with chagrin red her face is,
And declares 'tis really shocking—
His unskilfulness provoking,
Horrid, dreadful, aggravating—
Where did he learn roller-skating?
Clumsy fellow! He, retorting,
Says she's worse. Thus ends their courting.

—B. C.

The baby's favorite game—Ah fours.

The height of fashion—A dude's collar.

Laborers who are always healthy—Well-diggers.

The daughters of a millionaire always have fine figures.

Breeches of promise—Trousers put up as collateral for a loan.

Extinguishing a lamp is like a small supper—it is a light blow-out.

If a fish is good for the brain, Jonah ought to have developed ability.

Women are not inventive as a rule—they have no eagerness for new wrinkles.

Many men seek the truth, but they don't seem to give it away when they find it.

All men, says the Declaration of Independence, are created free and equal. Yes, but then some of them get married.

"Oh, Emeline, come quick! The baby's tumbled down into the cistern. We's fishin' for him half an hour wid an umbereller handle and a piece o' sponge cake, an' we can't even get a nibble."

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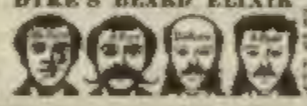

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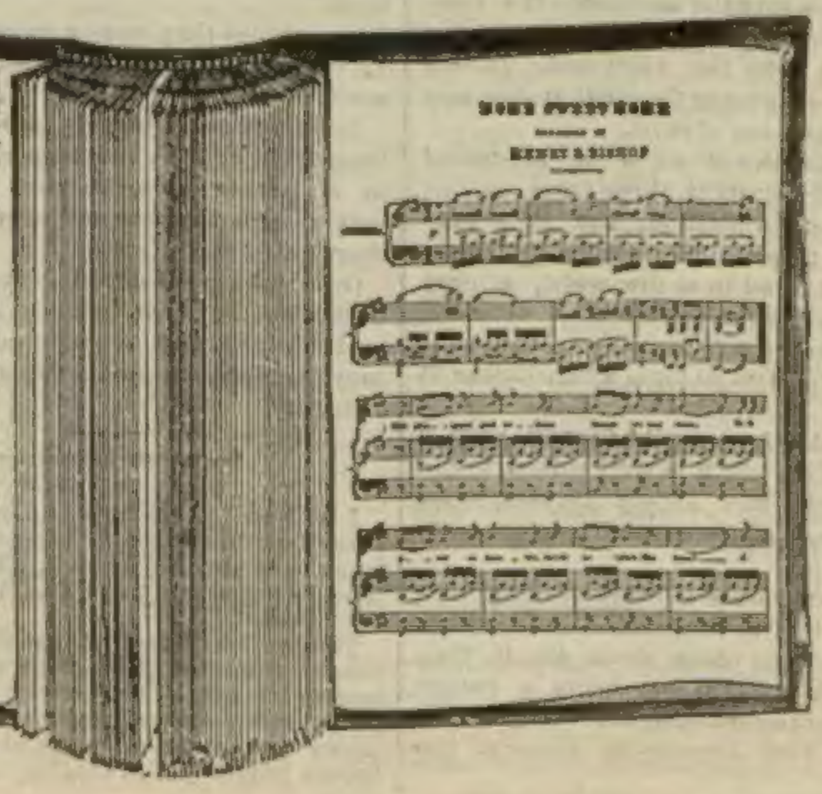

Latest Fashion Phases.

We are not all fortunate enough to be able to send to the best tailors and dressmakers for our winter and autumn gowns, and, indeed, if there is any time in the year when semi-worn and renovated garments can be used with advantage, it is when the short, dark days set in.

I always find it the best plan to buy the few new dresses I must have in the spring, when every mark shows up in the welcome sunshine, and we have so many cold days in early summer even that a good tailor-made, or indeed, any kind of winter dress quite new, is a most useful addition to the wardrobe.

It may be a comfort to those who have acted on my plan, and bought a winter dress last spring, to know that there is no great and radical change in the make of such gowns, and that, if they were fashionable then, they will be almost equally so now.

In nine cases out of ten, when a dress of this order is really in good order, it is a fatal mistake to rearrange it.

Tailors' work has the great merit of durability, and demands few of those stitches in time which, according to my thinking, not only saves nine but ninety stitches.

Therefore, if last year's winter dresses are tidy, be content with them as they are.

If they were put away well brushed, even if they had lost a little of their pristine freshness in the summer light, they will look quite new now.

Do not be deluded, by hearing that straight draperies are the fashion, into undoing any puffing at the back of your skirts; if well arranged, they are better as they are.

But there is a stage of wear when these puffings are crushed and spoilt, when knife or kilt plaits have become untacked, when the skirts are too narrow altogether.

For the benefit of those who have dresses in this condition requiring renovation, or have purchased some of the inexpensive and excellent woolen stuffs which they do not care to give out to be made, I propose to offer some suggestions.

In the first place, in making the skirts, be sure you have a good strong foundation. Vicuna and some of the thinner makes of woolen stuff hang better over silk, and an old good silk is valuable for this, but, as a rule, alpaca or Russian cord answers the purpose best.

You should cut this foundation as follows, for unless this is all right, nothing will make the skirt hang properly.

The back breadth is a straight piece of 27in. at the lower edge, and tapers at the waist to 14in.

These are mounted at each side by a gore 17in. wide, tapering to 12in., the straight side next the front.

Round the bottom put a good strong false hem 6in. deep at least, and bind with braid. See that the watchpocket is 3in. from the centre of front.

I always advocate the tailor's plan of a good pocket on both side for those who carry much in their pockets, it equalizes the weight, and enables the skirt to hang better, even if heavily weighed. Many dressmakers have given up steels at the back, but one 12in. from the waist across the back breadth is an easy method of making the skirt stand out, if assisted by a double mattress stuffed with horsehair, the lower 12in. by 6in., the upper 3in. smaller in length and breadth.

Use good strong banding for the waistband, tack a white cross-stitch sewing in the exact centre of the front, so that you may know exactly when the gown is on that it is in the middle; and down the back seam sew two sets of strings 11in. apart, for tying back to keep the skirt out. In this way you have a proper foundation for any sort of arrangement of skirt.

The easiest make of all is an all-round skirt, perfectly straight, three parts as full again as the foundation, the hem surmounted by three to five tucks 3in. deep each, and gathered in at the waist, almost as full in the front as the back.

An improvement is to make another runner 6in. below, and so form a bouillonne at the waist.

This sort of skirt may be made with a bodice to match, but it is well suited to the Jersey bodices and Jersey jackets, to be had cheap, and which save all trouble as to bodice making.

Many skirts consist entirely of broad box-plaits from 6in. to 8in. wide, and much wider; also of kilt plaits from 4in. to 6in.; but they look better if you bring a panier drapery from the front, and a straight cut train piece just looped up twice at the back.

Kilt plaits of the small narrow description at the edge of the foundation skirt are generally added, but are not absolutely necessary, and in some of the fashionable French gowns are replaced by a full ruche of the material, pinked out on either edge!

Many of the full all-round skirts are bordered with a band of plush or fur, and the foundation skirt has a similar finish; but this makes the skirt look too short. Panels are introduced in skirts of a distinct material, such as embossed velvet and damasse velveteen; plush and rich embroideries, where the purse permits, and then the skirt proper is bordered and plaited to meet these panels.

Many tunics of woolen gowns are turned upwards, milkmaid fashion, not so much across the front, but opening in the centre of the front they turn toward the hips, showing a lining.

Then again, plain skirts of same thick striped material form a petticoat, requiring no foundation, and a tunic over this falls in very deep folds, but is short at the sides.

Parisian dressmakers cut the edge of the tunic when on the skirt, but it requires more skill than an ordinary home dressmaker possesses, and if a fashionable bordered material is used, it cannot be done unless the border is subsequently sewn on.

But bear in mind that selvedges are now considered trimming, even when they are are of contrasting color.

Draping is an art requiring skill and training.

An amateur, by a careful study of sketches of skirts and good models, may perchance achieve a success; but over-confidence is apt to lead to defeat. A dress-stand is necessary, and they are somewhat deceptive.

I have often, as I thought, draped a tunic upon them in graceful folds, but when I put it on found that I had made the sides of the gown stand out like a farthingale.

You must keep certain measurements in view, and the fulness to the back, and, though no two sides should be looped alike, the plaits of such drapery at the waist should in a manner correspond.

An easy and a fashionable drapery now worn can be arranged as follows on a skirt, the foundation of which may be seen without displaying anything unsightly: Take a width of wide material, long enough to reach to very nearly the hem in front, or to the top of any trimming that may have been placed there, but it would look best over a plain skirt of striped fabric; divide the width in half in front and pin the middle at the top to the centre of the band; then plait the half in four or five single horizontal plaits, turning toward the waist; this makes one edge of the material hang straight.

Take the other side, and, beginning at the lower edge, form that side into four single plaits, and fasten that on the side of the skirt, where it naturally comes, and dispose the fulness of the half at the waist as it falls on the waistband, drawing as much backwards as you can.

This gives a tunic with a point in front. You treat the back in exactly the same way, taking care that the straight side of the back comes to the plaited side of the front, and *vice versa*.

An amateur cannot go far wrong with this.

Now, with regard to the bodices, if you have not a good pattern, and have not learnt the art of taking one, unpick an old bodice, and follow it faithfully. Bodices now are made full and banded, or with short points in front, and habit shape at the back.

Sometimes they have a cross-cut band of velvet, or of some contrasting material, sewn on either side.

Long and short jackets are worn, with loose front or with short-cut vests buttoned in on either side, so that they may be moved with pleasure and a change made thereby.

One of the good double-lined cashmeres, with a leather, a white cloth, a velvet steel embroidered, and a cardinal cloth vest, may be mistaken for a fresh gown at each change.

Domestic Economy.

ODDS AND ENDS.

I will commence this paper by trying to describe a brown paper basket for giving away with flowers or fruit, which, to those who do not already know of it, will be found very useful.

It is well known that baskets do disappear in the most mysterious way, and when lent to friends, or sent away with garden produce, are scarcely ever returned. These paper baskets are made of the stoutest brown paper, folded double, and kept in shape by the gilt-headed double-stemmed pins, such as bills are kept together by, or packets of patterns, which pass through the folded paper, and are then divided and flattened back on each side.

Different sized baskets can be made, but I give the dimensions of a tolerably large and convenient one.

Take a folded piece of stout brown paper 21in. long and 16in. broad, fold down the four edges inwards to the depth of 4½in., then double out the corners so that the points go across each other outside the ends of the basket, then fix these by running the pins through and dividing the points, turning them each way.

The double-stemmed corners are of course the only troublesome part, and practice will make perfect; but I may perhaps simplify matters by explaining that the two ends of the basket are first folded in the centre, then the sides folded on them, then a deep crease is made toward the point of the corner, which runs between the others and forms a broad arrow. The four sides now stand up.

Put the left hand inside, and with the right pinch the paper into the centre crease running into the corner.

The handle is then folded four times to make it extra strong, and fastened to the sides by two more nails.

It should be 7½in. long and 2½in. wide when folded in four.

This is strong enough to carry a bunch or two of grapes, as well as flowers.

Ornamental baskets can be made of cardboard, painted brown, and then covered with pieces of irregular cork, previously strung together on thread.

The handle is composed of loosely-plaited strings of cork, either three or four, kept down by stitches of brown cotton. The edge of the basket is done in much the same way, the rest being put on in plain or twisted rows.

This is a capital way of using up old corks, and amuses children for hours.

The basket is afterwards lined with satin, plush or cashmere.

Flower-pot cases and boxes can be treated in the same way.

Japanese applique work is being a good deal done at present, for cushions, screens, valances, and piano backs.

The design is usually taken from willow pattern china, or some picture, and the effect is carried out in scraps of satin, silk, and velvet, worked up in silks of all kinds.

A design is sketched out, and the scraps delicately gummed on, dried and pressed, and afterwards worked round with strands of filoselle or floss silk, stitched down at short distances, or else button-holed, chain stitched, or herring-boned.

In fact, any stitches may be put in, according to the fancy of the worker.

A Chinese pagoda could be arranged with blue or black satin, worked over in gold, large standing or flying storks of red satin, or velvet, flower receptacles of some other colored satin, and bushes and flowers and willow trees in any scraps of odd silks. A large cluster of flowers, all in different colored satins, overworked in silks, can be made to look very effective. The background is of velveteen, satin, or Roman sheeting. At several of the fancy work shops this new and fanciful work is to be seen, and it is excellent for using up all sorts of odds and ends.

It is also interesting, pleasant and easy work.

Large yellow poppies in cloth, plush, or velvet, worked with shaded silk, on a brown serge background; red ones on black or cream; or a bold leaf design in old-gold satin sheeting on brown velvet, with beads round the edges are all fashionable work. A traced design on plush or velvet, worked in gold and iridescent beads, instead of silks is very popular now for valances and small table screens, also for gloves and handkerchief sachets, ornamental bellows, and blotting-book covers.

Brown peacock-green, and claret are the favorite colors for the foundation, and any braiding or crewel design is suitable, especially a water scene, with rushes and grass, kingfisher, and water-lily leaves. Beads and silks are usually combined, the outlining being done often with the beads, and the veining, &c., with the silks, or *vice versa*.

Bassinette quilts are often given now as christening presents to infant god-children, and they are of white satin sheeting, trimmed with cream lace, with a worked or painted design of flowers near one corner.

The usual size is 22in. long and 20in. wide, and the two lower corners are rounded. There is a flap to turn over from the top, neatly joined on at the back, before the lining is quite finished off, and this is 5in. wide, and has also rounded corners. As satin sheeting is very wide, three-quarters of a yard is more than sufficient. The lace need not go round the entire quilt, but only along the flap, and should be a little full.

Pale pink or blue plush is used, and sometimes the name or monogram of the little recipient is worked in beads or silk in the centre.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

He wrote: "A pin is a very queer sort of a thing. It has a round head and a sharp point; and if you stick pins into you, they hurts. Women uses pins to pin on their cuffs and collars, and men use pins when the buttons is off. You can get pins for five cents a paper; but if you swallow them they will kill you: but they have saved thousands of lives." "Why, Thomas, what do you mean by that?" said the teacher. The boy answered: "By people not swallowin' of 'em."

Confidential Correspondents.

S. L. C.—It is the same paper, called by the same name. The SATURDAY EVENING POST was started in 1821 and has been published without a stoppage since.

J. K.—A postmaster is a confidential servant of the public, and deviates from his duty when communicating the addresses or nature of those letters passing through his hands.

J. B.—All you can now do is to write to the young lady, explain the circumstances which led you so inadvertently to walk with the other young lady, and solicit her forgiveness.

FRANK.—It is the duty of a lady to recognize a gentleman first when meeting in the street, supposing their acquaintance only to be slight; but if they be intimate, they may both bow at the same time.

ETIQUETTE.—When a visiting-card is turned down at the corner, it implies that the person having it means to include the visitors to the family, as well as the family themselves, in the compliment of his call.

LILLIAN.—1. It is impossible for us to say whether or not the young man is simply "amusing himself," with you. You ought to be the best judge of his conduct, being in his company and hearing his conversation. 2. Not more than five minutes.

ISABEL.—The young gentleman who takes you so frequently to the theatre, and scarcely opens his mouth to speak, is, in our opinion, a timid lover, and not a coxcomb. Many brave-hearted men are cowed and abashed in the presence of the fairer sex. It is for you to draw him out.

ROSE.—It is not easy to suggest topics of conversation for a young lady when a young gentleman is introduced to her; nor, indeed, ought it to be at all necessary, inasmuch as it is the part of the gentleman himself to furnish the materials for the small talk that usually prevails on such occasions.

BEAUTY.—It strikes us that a young lady who is industrious and studious, and obeys and assists her mother, is much more likely to win not only the respect but the love of any sensible gentleman than one who selfishly consults her own ease and gratification, however much she may dress and play the agreeable.

ELLEN.—You probably have not heard of the fable which tells us that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbor's faults, and another behind him, in which he stows his own. Shakspeare, in "Coriolanus," says, "Oh, that you could turn your eyes towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves."

PERT.—Young ladies must wait—if not patiently, at least with an outward show of patience—until gentlemen propose to them. No well-bred or modest young female would think of making any overture towards one of the opposite sex, though she may give a gentleman whom she is interested in a fair share of encouragement if he appears to reciprocate the feeling.

BETTINA.—You had better seek your happiness through and with your husband. Do not allow anything to distract you from him. He will be more likely to yield to your wish to go to the housekeeping than to remain very long where you are unhappy. But take courage; endeavor to be cheerful and pleasant, and make him love you more and more. Men yield everything to those who love and please them.

ELTHAM.—Wedding cake should be sent to intimate friends, or to any with whom you are desirous of keeping up a correspondence; cake, and cards, with white bows, and and the rest of it; but if there be any with whom you do not wish to continue an acquaintance, be careful not to include them in this courtesy. All single friendships are supposed to die out when persons marry, and must, if sought, be renewed by this attention.

LADY JANE.—The treatment of warts is to pare the hard and dry skin from their tops, and then touch them with the smallest drop of strong acetic acid, taking care that the acid does not run off the wart upon the neighboring skin, for if it do, it will occasion inflammation and much pain. If this practice be continued once or twice daily, with regularity, paring the surface of the wart when it gets hard and dry, the wart may be soon effectually cured.

TOBY.—It is an old proverb that "there is many a true word spoken in jest;" and it is equally true that many a stinging and embittering word is spoken in fun also. In fact, jesting is a dangerous business, and one into which no man should too freely enter, lest he becomes bankrupt in friendship. Your experience is a common one. All you can now do is to treat the lady with all possible politeness and kindness, and trust to time to heal the wound which you so unwittingly inflicted.

RAVEN.—Song is the generic term for everything that is sung; but it is generally appropriated to any air for a single voice. Ballad was originally a song of praise, but now is a kind of popular song containing the recital of some action, adventure, or intrigue; such as are especially the meaner kind of songs sung in the streets. Glee, as its name denotes, means a joyous song, as distinguished from madrigal, which ought to be of a pastoral love song, sung by shepherds in their sheepfolds.

ELAINE.—"The Pardoner's Tale," in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," is called "Death and the Rioters." Three Rioters agree to hunt down Death and kill him. An old man directs them to a tree in a lane where, as he said, he had just left him. On reaching the spot they find a rich treasure, and cast lots to decide who is to go and buy food. The lot falls on the youngest, and the other two, during his absence, agree to kill him on his return. The rascal sent to buy food poisons the wine, in order to secure to himself the whole treasure. So Death is found.

AVIS.—When a long time elapses without eating, and also when digestion is impaired, the quantity of tartar which accumulates on the teeth is very great. Hence they are always most encrusted in the morning, and during fevers and other affections, when little or no food is taken. Regular washing and brushing ought, therefore, to be sedulously practiced at every period of life, and taught as a duty to the young. When digestion is very vigorous, the health good, and the diet plain, and containing a full proportion of vegetable matter, the deposition of tartar seems to be diminished, and the teeth preserve their natural color.